

Report Zambia Day Saturday 5th April 2014



First of all: many compliments to our hostess Ineke ten Cate! She had organized the staff restaurant "FORUM" in the ZGT- hospital (Ziekenhuis-groep Twente) in Hengelo. Together with Chair of the Day Wim Goris she was in charge of the event. From all over the Netherlands the members of Platform Zambia arrived; more than 70 persons had registered.

The first guests to arrive were from Bruxelles: the H.E. Ambassador of Zambia, Mrs Grace M. Mutale Kabwe, accompanied by Mrs. Bwalya Zulu Yombwe (First Secretary Trade) and Mr. Musenge Mukuma (First Secretary Economics).



At 10 hrs everyone was inside, except the technical man. The people who were present immediately used the delay of half an hour to start networking. For many indeed that was the aim of the event: to meet each other, to get to know each other, what is common among the activities of the different groups?

Finally, the beamer was installed after 40 minutes and Platform Chair Nelke van der Lans opened the Zambia Day by welcoming all present. Thereafter the Chair of the Day Wim Goris explained the program and introduced the first speaker, the H.E. Ambassador of Zambia.



Mrs Grace M. Mutale Kabwe officially opened the day with a nice speech in which she expressed her pleasure with today's meeting of Dutch friends who have developed an intensive interest in Zambia. It feels as "One Family". Especially where the Dutch private NGO's work in the *rural areas* they accomplish most helpful support for the poorest, those who do not get much attention in the practice of national policy.

After the heartwarming opening speech, Platform Chair Nelke van der Lans presented to Mrs Ambassador a framed collage with pictures and all the logo's of the member organisations of the Platform Zambia.



Cor van der Heijden, Chair of the Foundation Support Luangwa Valley, delivered a catching presentation titled "A project from the start to a successful end". He showed how a small group of Dutch experts in co-operation with local experts (i.c. Father Toon van Kessel) has uplifted the economy of the isolated area within seven years. They



started with the construction of a road, after which they bought the harvested crops of the local farmers, and organised the storage of maize for periods of shortage. In times of bad harvest and hunger the farmers could now buy food again from the supplies in stock. Gradually, the traders with lorries entered the area and connected the local markets with the national market. The inhabitants have taken their existence in their own hands. After 10 years the organisation can be phased out because the objectives have been reached.

The next part of the morning programme were group meetings on seven themes, based on the activities of the ngo's:

1. Education / training
2. Income generating activities (of the target group)
3. Health Care
4. Orphan children
5. Water / sanitation
6. Wind- and solar-energy
7. Fundraising actions



Every group had received an instruction and a number of questions for discussion. It was remarkable that most participants felt a strong need to present their own experiences in Zambia first. In quite a few groups little time was left for exchanges and discussion. This was also due to the shortening of time because of the late start in the morning. During a plenary session all representatives of the groups have given a short feedback on the matters discussed.

Annexed to this report the most striking aspects of the discussions will be presented.



Kitchen princess Helen had prepared a wonderful lunch. Not stopping with talking people were patiently waiting in a row in order to have a cup of soup, some bread, diverse fillings and drinks.

The afternoon programme started with an introduction by Harrie van der Hout about the background of the film "Breaking Silent Shame" of the Poor People's Fund dealing with the VVF project in Our Lady's Hospital in Chilonga, Zambia. Thereafter the film was shown. We observed how (often very young) women suffer from continuing loss of urine. Due to problems in an earlier delivery an abnormal connection (so-called fistel) had developed between bladder and vagina. The hopelessness was written on their faces. After being operated by a medical team, the women had a new future and new perspectives. A moving example of humanitarian assistance in the purest form! The message of prevention coming with the film is: "Go to the health clinic to deliver your baby with expert assistance!"



After the film the second round of group discussions was held. The groups were differently composed so that the participants could deal with at least two different themes.

In some of the groups the time was very short since the participants wanted to present themselves again.

Thereafter, as in the morning, a short plenary feedback was given to the audience. A summary is found in the annex.



At the end of the afternoon program the Day Chair expressed his gratitude to the presence of the guest of honour, the H.E. Ambassador of Zambia, Mrs Grace M. Mutale Kabwe and her colleagues. She had participated in diverse theme group discussions and showed great involvement with the issues. For us Dutchmen she is Our Ambassador!

Finally, the audience was asked for suggestions for the location of the next Zambia Day in 2015. Two options came forward: one in Eindhoven and one in Amersfoort. The Platform Board, c.q. the Working Group Zambia Day, is going to investigate the options and will publish a proposal in the autumn.



After the closure of the program, it was time for the drinks. As usual this offered new possibilities for networking by contact and exchange, or just enjoying a glass of juice, beer or wine, after a day hard working.

WHO WERE PRESENT and HOW MANY?

- 1 Embassy (3 persons)
- 23 Platform Organisations (49 persons)
- 8 other organisations (10 persons)
- 8 individuals
- 3 boardmembers (also member of platform organisations)
- 3 other working group members (1 also being a member of a platform organisation)

Total 72 participants

Summary of the feedback from the group meetings (partly copied from the evaluation forms)

1. Education/training

Helpful discussions, good remarks based on the earlier received questions.

Next time: use subthemes, such as pre/primary/secondary schools and vocational schools

2. Income generating activities (of the target group)

Main question: What is the target group? Is the request coming from the local population or from outside? Find influential local people who can create a social basis.

Ask for own financial contribution or for instance 10 or 20 %, that can be paid back.

Ask for the district policy plan and find out if the activities fit into the plan.

Possible fields for income generating activities are: tourism, kitchen garden, shop (find a starting fund for selling first necessities of life to the community).

Motivate the local partner to take responsibility. Motivate the local partner to build a professional local organization.

3. Health Care

Usual activity is transfer of knowledge, for instance on the maintenance of equipment.

Important aspects are the continuity and one or more steady reliable local approachable persons.

Ask for a budget and feedback from Zambia (needed for the payments from the Netherlands).

Ad hoc assistance is tricky; continuity is preferable.

4. Orphan children

None of the participants can respond to the question how many orphan children in Zambia live in orphanages; it is probably a relatively low number. Is the government willing to contribute? Keep the official way and try to find family members. Contacts with the local government seem to function better than the national ones. It does not always seem useful to connect an orphanage to a school. A call for support to “disadvantaged children” seems to turn out badly on the long term.

Contacts with *volunteers* (even if they are well-disposed) are not good for the development of children due to the continuous changes. Contacts with family are usually difficult.

5. Water / sanitation

The Sanitation Study of M. Keller was discussed; advices about hand pumps were given, etc. One of the participants had more questions about low-tech basis facilities; s/he experienced the sanitation discussion as too specific and almost professional.

6. Wind and solar energy

Besides wind energy other forms of energy have been discussed, such as *cookits* (solar energy) and biogas. Disadvantage of *cookits* is that the users often find cooking too slow and put the cookit aside.

7. Fundraising actions

The group submits the following ideas for fundraising activities (primarily for the own network of friends and family) in the Netherlands: cycling trip, sponsor walk, music performance).

Submit a request to the Wild Geese. Write to Vastenactie, Rotary Clubs, *Share for More* of the Rabobank and Capital Funds.

Think of the option to deduct the costs of volunteers from taxes (up to € 1500,-).

