

AUGUST 2021

FOSA NEWSLETTER



News from the Fairfield Children's Homes



A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

By Jeff Matheny

Fairfield Outreach & Sponsors Association (FOSA)



This past year and a half has been challenging for everyone – and our friends at the Fairfield Children's Homes (FCH) are no exception. While people all across the globe have been forced to adapt to rapidly evolving circumstances, an already struggling Zimbabwe has been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite high unemployment and economic instability, the children and staff at Fairfield are coping well given the current events plaguing the country and the world.

The economy of Zimbabwe was having significant challenges prior to the pandemic, and unfortunately, there has been little improvement and no end in sight. The official exchange rate today is 85 Zim to 1 US dollar. That is up from about 15 to one during my last visit to the country in the Fall of 2019. While the stores seem to be stocked, the exchange rate variations make shopping anywhere more difficult, volatile, and time consuming.

While some COVID vaccines are available, both access and supply are very limited. My hope is that the increasing supply of vaccines in other parts of the world will help

increase the supply available in Zimbabwe so that more people will be able to get fully vaccinated in the coming year. With limited vaccines, the government has instituted strict lockdowns and travel restrictions between cities in an effort to slow the spread of the virus. These measures have consequentially made access to work and school very difficult, if not impossible. Although they are trying to shift to a more digital format in education, unreliable power and limited internet capacity has produced mixed results – especially in the more rural parts of the country.

FOSA has continued to work closely with the Fairfield Administrator and lend our support as we work through this pandemic. Unfortunately, I am afraid that the virus will prove to be more difficult, and take longer to get under control, in the developing world due to the slow rate of vaccinations and the limited capacity of the healthcare system. Please keep the children and staff at Fairfield in your prayers as they struggle to get through these most recent challenges and tribulations.

On behalf of the entire Board, I want to thank you for your continued support of the children at Fairfield during these very difficult days, especially as we face hardship here at home. Your support and compassion is the foundation of our work, and we are eternally grateful for each and every one of you.

Sincerely,
Jeff Matheny

PROJECTS AROUND THE HOMES

2021 Projects



FCH staff shelling the 2021 maize harvest



FCH's piggery project is improving, and they are in the process of building a proper big stay. There are currently 13 porkers and 4 females



FCH installed solar lighting in 6 houses plus the Administration office, leaving only 2 houses left to be installed.

LOOKING TO SPONSOR?

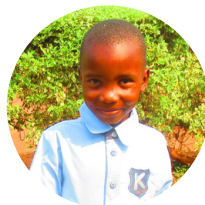
Issa and Vlad Need Sponsors!

Issa Marimo, Age 13



Issa loves learning math and science, agriculture, and Shona. He also loves to read books! His favorite food is chicken and rice and his favorite hobbies are soccer and basketball.

Vlad Marimo, Age 6



Vlad is 6 1/2 years old and absolutely brilliant! He loves playing with his toys, and his favorite food is chicken and rice.

**Find out more about sponsorships
at <http://fosakids.org>**

FAIRFIELD BUDDIES CLUB

By Loveness Luhlanga (South Africa)
Former President, Fairfield Buddies



Loveness Luhlanga

Fairfield Buddies Club is more than a club on Africa University campus. It is a home in which we all have each other's back and support. We all have learned one or two things from each other as a group with diversity, with members from Zambia, Ghana, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Malawi. In moments of sharing, having "bring and share" activities brought us together and reminded us of our uniqueness, thus embracing one another.

Club members can confirm that this club introduced us to a world of professionalism, we had to plan activities for fundraising, schedule meetings and attend those formal meetings. Therefore, there are more professional skills acquired from planning an activity to hosting the activity and the joy it brings for achieving those objectives.

“I pray that many people can relate to those joyful souls who yearn for family love.”

Fairfield Children's Home is more than a home to most Africa University students who are a part of Fairfield Buddies Club. It is a place to share, love, learn, connect and motivate. Our club's mission is not to provide charity work and donations to the Fairfield Children's Home, but to build a family bond with a support system. In most instances, younger people learn from adults, but the interaction is a two-way learning with the "Fairfield buddies," as we call them.

The buddies are full of life and smart, and personally I have learned to be grateful for the gift of life through communicating with them. I have learned so much about the Shona culture through the Buddies, and this is one of the many gifts I received since I joined the Club on campus. They have shared inspiring stories career wise about how they want to make Africa a better place for everyone. Without a doubt we all have discovered our strengths by connecting with them, by having Sunday sessions that we used for emotional and moral support, and resetting from school work by planning meaningful games. I pray that many people can relate to those joyful souls who yearn for family love. Thanks to everyone who is supporting our brothers and sisters in need.



HISTORY OF FAIRFIELD BUDDIES

By Owen Ross



The Fairfield Buddies started in the fall, 2002. I was a student at Africa University studying African Christian Theology as part of my seminary studies. About a mile on the other side of the valley from Africa University was what was then known as the Fairfield Orphanage. I would visit it almost daily. Other students had been visiting the children as well. Sometimes other students would join me, especially on weekends. When I was an undergraduate at Texas A&M, I was an "Aggie Buddy" for an elementary school student named Paul. The idea came to start the "Fairfield Buddies" program, modeled after the Aggie Buddies or Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Key to the success of Fairfield Buddies was our organizational structure. Fairfield had about 40 children at the time in a single, small building. My friends and I gathered eight "Uncles/Aunts," each responsible for five children. They were then responsible for recruiting five Buddies, one for each child. During that time, when students would visit, we would be overwhelmed by the number of children hungering for attention. The design of the Fairfield Buddies was for each student to have their own Buddy, and if their Buddy could not make it, they had an Aunt/Uncle to give them attention. The individual interaction and individual relationship touched the lives of the students, perhaps even more than the children.

"WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO BE A MILLIONAIRE"

By Catherine Hapaori

House 7, Age 19



Catherine Hapaori

Earning money is more difficult than spending it. If it comes to me as a windfall, I shall consider myself the fortune's favourite. As soon as I'm in possession of a million rupees, I shall lose no time in achieving many of my unfulfilled wishes. The money being talked about, may either be inherited from a rich relative or won in lotteries.

The moment I become a millionaire, I shall buy a palace-like residence for myself, enter it with all fanfare and perform religious ceremonies on a very grand scale. It will be followed by a high standard lunch for my friends, relatives, and well-wishers. Soon after shifting into the new house, I shall charter a special plane and embark on a world tour with all my family members.

“ I shall see the seven wonders, visit world capitals, enjoy cultural shows and make purchases of special items from many countries. Since I hail from a poor family, I did not have the advantage of having my education from a good school. I shall provide facilities of a very high standard of free education to the children from poor families. For this I intend to start an English medium school at my hometown.

” I shall also establish an orphanage and a home for the elderly in order to help those who have no one to look after them. I'm sure all of these ambitious dreams would make me exhaust the windfall in order to be realized. But before I start on activating them, I must wait for my million to come into my empty chest.

Would you like to pray for me?

DID YOU KNOW...

Zimbabwe is home to Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the world? While it is neither the highest nor the widest waterfall in the world, Victoria Falls are classified as the largest, based on its combined width of 1,708 meters (5,604 ft) and height of 108 meters (354 ft), resulting in the world's largest sheet of falling water. The Victoria Falls are roughly twice the height of North America's Niagara Falls and well over twice its width.



OH, THE PLACES THEY'LL GO!

Updates From a Few Form 4 Students



Munashe Matenga loves to help the little ones with their homework. She is doing well in school and would like to be a teacher and major in Physical Education. During lockdown, she taught the children dances and activities to keep them entertained.



Simbarashe T Tichaona is very interested in agriculture. During lockdown, he planted and sold vegetables from his garden. He wants to be an Agronomist or Veterinary Doctor and works hard to achieve this goal.



Precious Shumba passed 4 subjects this term and says she wants to go straight to college after Form 4, during which she would like to take courses in Fashion and Fabrics.



Annah Makore is officially back at college after the long break due of COVID-19. She is now in her second year of college and she loves it!



Moreblessing Tinotenda is very talented with music and playing basketball – in fact, he was chosen to represent Manicaland in South Africa but unfortunately could not go due to COVID-19. Although he spends most of his time playing basketball, Moreblessing would like to take courses to become an Electrician.

FAIRFIELD ALUMNA

Justice Manhando

I am delighted to share with you that I recently graduated with an Honors Degree in Medical Laboratory Sciences from Africa University. It goes on with special mention to Fairfield, God, great family and the FOSA Board and members who I all count twice, if not thrice, when counting my blessings. It is because of Fairfield's love that I have reached this milestone. I therefore express loudly my unlimited gratitude for this to be a success. I really appreciate it.

With this degree, I am currently working at a private Hospital Lab in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, as an intern Medical Lab Scientist. The scope of my job is to work in a medical laboratory, performing diagnostic tests on blood, body fluids and body tissues with the aim of disease diagnosis, checking progress, treatment effectiveness, and alertness of future health complications for patients.



Justice Manhando

For example, in this time of COVID, if a patient comes and presents symptoms of respiratory disorders and/or pneumonia, the first thing to do is rule out COVID-19 through screening and testing using the PCR and antigen test. This is then cemented with more evaluation on cardiac markers and the CRP test.

My short term plan is to work here for a year until I get an Open Practice Certificate, which will allow me to work freely and independently anywhere. After, I hope to work outside my country, but in Africa, for exposure and more responsibility. Eventually, I would like to work in Europe or America for about 5 years, study, possibly receive a Masters in Public Health, then return to serve Africa.

FAIRFIELD ALUMNA

Biggie Matanda



Biggie Matanda

My name is Biggie Matanda, an orphan who grew up at Fairfield Children's Homes. I am the first Fairfield recipient to receive a full scholarship from Africa University. What an honor and privilege! It has been a blessing. I truly hope that my experience will inspire other students from FCH to pursue their dreams.

“
The Fairfield dream
is fully alive, I can
now face tomorrow
with the promise that
my life will not be
the same”

Growing up in a less privileged community with scarce financial endowment, my pursuit of a college education seemed bleak. Fortunately, because of the Fairfield Children's Homes I am now a graduate with an Honors in Accounting (Cum Laude) Second Best Student in Accounting 2021 (CGPA 3.63). The Fairfield dream is fully alive, I can now face tomorrow with the promise that my life will not be the same. Although I anticipate some challenges ahead as I am planning my advancement to be a Chartered Accountant, and at the same time finding a job, I am walking with my head held high. I would like to thank everyone who has been a part of my life's journey, right from primary school, high school and university level. A special shout out goes to Fairfield mothers, FOSA Board members and Africa University staff, who have been the wind beneath my wings. Thank you for your sacrifices and mentorship, I hope that I make you proud as I go out into the world.

Over the course of the last four years, I have endeavored to give back to the community through tutoring math and accounting during semester vacations. During 2020-2021 lockdowns I assisted my local church with auditing their financial books. As a youth leader at Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, I have been given the opportunity to deliver sermons on alternative days on Zoom. My sole vision is to see other orphans excelling and my long-term goal is to build a company together with my old brothers and sisters as directors of the company and assist Fairfield in the future, because we are the future of FOSA.

Fairfield Children's Homes has opened up bridges for me that would otherwise not be possible for an orphan. For this, I am eternally grateful. From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for making my dream come true through your generosity. May the Almighty God continue to richly bless Fairfield Children's Homes and FOSA.

CAREERS FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Supporting Dreams Through Education



scan me!



One of the many things that makes Fairfield unique, is the fact that our support doesn't stop after high school. In fact, each child at Fairfield is given the opportunity to attend college thanks to the Careers For A Brighter Future (CFBF) fund. When you donate to the CFBF fund, you are helping fund a child's college education, living expenses, and additional costs to help them receive their degree and accomplish their dreams.

ZIMBABWE AT A GLANCE

2020 Updates



The COVID-19 pandemic continued to wreak havoc in Zimbabwe this past year. Strict lockdowns coupled with widespread unemployment only added to the already troubling political unrest across the country. After reaching a decade high of 838% in July 2020, inflation rates have slowed to 162% in May of 2021. Here are some other highlights:

3.5 MILLION VACCINES



Zimbabwe is set to receive 3.5 million vaccines from China this summer. According to the World Health Organization. As of July 2021, a total of 1,361,210 vaccine doses have been administered.

Bloomberg.com

EXTREME POVERTY RISES TO 50%

The number of extreme poor is expected to remain at 7.9 million (50%) in 2021 amid continued elevated prices, and a slow recovery of jobs and wages in the formal and informal sectors - Extreme poor is considered those living under the food poverty line of USD \$29.80 for each person a month.

World Bank Report

4 MILLION OUT OF SCHOOL



Schools were closed at the end of March 2020 for 6 months during the pandemic. Although schools have reopened, more impoverished households are keeping children out of school to save on education expenses, like tuition fees, uniforms, and text books.

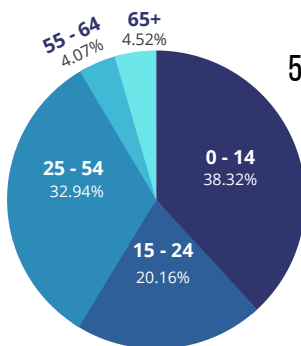
Human Rights Watch

GOVERNMENT AMENDS EDUCATION ACT



The amendment prohibits corporal punishment in schools and the exclusion of pregnant girls from school in accordance with the Zimbabwe Constitution, which guarantees the right to education. The law also mandates every school to provide suitable infrastructure for students with disabilities and requires authorities to ensure that schools protect the rights of students with disabilities.

Human Rights Watch



58% OF POPULATION IS UNDER 25 YEARS

Making up more than 50% of the population, children and young adults disproportionately bear the brunt of the economic crisis worsened by the pandemic.

CIA World Fact Book



67% OF RURAL AREAS LACK CLEAN WATER

Access to adequate clean water and sanitation in Zimbabwe continues to be an issue, especially for those living in rural areas. Inadequate access to safe drinking water threatens to worsen the spread of COVID-19. Many women and girls have to travel an average of 4km (2.5 miles) to fetch water every day, forcing many girls to miss school.

The Borgen Project

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW...



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