

Dear Teacher Aid Supporters and friends,

Newsletter June 2024

The year 2023 certainly whizzed by, and it's been jammed packed full of learning, development and care for the children of Nsobe Community School. Our warmest congratulations to Teacher Aid Trustees Maggie and Mike who tied the knot last October.



Zambia's academic year runs from January to December, so our school students sat their end of year and national exams and have school leaving certificates. Nsobe Community School consistently has excellent results, which is a remarkable achievement for a remote, rural school.

Thanks to Teacher Aid's support fund, generous Teacher Aid donors, and some government bursaries, a number of our school leavers have been able to study at Zambian universities and agricultural colleges. However, there are, and will be, many educated ex-Nsobe Pupils desperate to study further and unable to access the funds to do so. Please encourage friends to support Teacher Aid's Students loan scheme, so that the ex -students of Nsobe can secure tertiary pathways. The cost to support a student at university per year is around £800

Please help our bright, academic students to become engineers, doctors, accountants etc. also farmers or skilled tradesmen and be the educated citizens that Zambia needs.



During Oct/Nov Teacher Aid Trustees Maggie and Mike visited Nsobe, for the eighth consecutive year. Having paid their own air fare as always, they arrived with suitcases bulging with much needed resources for Nsobe including 20 laptops and an inverter for the school library. Mike was able to supervise much needed maintenance assessments and electrical and solar repairs, for which we are very grateful. During their visit we held our end of Primary graduation ceremony, arts and craft competitions which were a wonderful showcase of our local talent, creativity and showmanship.

Maggie and Mike were also able to see the Secondary Library, a great provision through the Welsh Government's Wales and Africa Grant Scheme, fostering literacy, love of reading, research and self-study. The Library is still being stocked through books donated and collected from Wales and friends of Nsobe. We have added a reading room extension where students can study with the library books and the TA provided laptops. School leavers and teachers will be able to access online distance courses. Our students have no electricity in their homes, no lighting, no tables, so this study area will be a huge benefit.



We are also excited to announce the appointment of Christine Whipp as a Teacher Aid Trustee. Chris is a retired teacher who ran a large school science department. She will bring a wealth of educational experience and wisdom to our team. Chris and her husband Simon visited Nsoke earlier this year for 2 weeks. Teacher Aid also supports Nsoke Community School's Feeding scheme, giving much needed daily nutritional support to every school child. Last year's annual fundraising walk, the Gower Yomp, helped raise money to support this critical need. We are most grateful for those who donated and participated. It was a wonderful day out and I was very lucky to be able to attend last year's walk and meet all 22 walkers! This year's Yomp is on 14th September – details on www.teacheraid.org.uk raising funds to run the safe houses.



The need for NCS is also increasing. We held Preschool enrollments, and 110 hopeful children tried to apply for 40 places. We will be building more classrooms for our Primary school as our community is hungry for education, and we cannot accommodate even half the demand. Sadly, we have also had some secondary school pregnancies, and a few dropouts with some parents encouraging girlchildren to enter into early marriages and boys going wayward due to lack of parental care. We trust that with the Safe Houses provided by Teacher Aid, future boarding houses for the most vulnerable children, safe school-provided social activities and the enlightenment of

education that these statistics will improve. We have been excited about Teacher Aid being Howell's School for Girl's Charity for 2023/24, and for the penpal initiatives and mutual learning opportunities between Welsh and Zambian classes that are ongoing. A huge thanks to Howell's School for raising funds for us during this academic year. The essential Teacher Aid Support Fund pays for the salaries of 17 out of the 34 Nsoke teaching staff and all of the support staff. We still need to access more funding as our teachers are only earning £130 a month, which is a 1/3 of Government teacher's salaries. Our teachers are dedicated, committed, and work incredibly hard. Our 2024 started well, with the Govt awarding us Grant-aided status. I am making a short video to explain its virtues. There were only 3 out of 100 schools successful enough to secure this.

The downside is the failure of crops due to the drought in Zambia, causing increased Maize (local staple food) costs which TA provide.

Hoping you all are enjoying a 2024 that is filled with peace, goodwill and success.

With gratitude

Fiona Tomlinson, Founder

