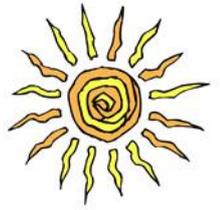




ZISIZE

Newsletter - December 2017



Dear Friends & Supporters,

Zisize supporters in UK have raised money this year through raffles, a twmpath dawns, a marathon, a Come Dine With Me evening, and a quiz. Thanks to those who took part in, organised, sponsored or attended those events. Thanks also to those who gave money to Zisize in lieu of flowers after my son Andrew's tragic, sudden death in July from a cardiac arrest, which has knocked the stuffing out of me; a huge thank you to all who have supported me subsequently. Andrew always gave generously himself to those in need, whether they be homeless people begging at traffic lights, friends in need, or children living in poverty in Ingwavuma. Money raised through all of the above will go towards providing a borehole at Thubalethu Primary School, which will serve not only the school but also the community.

In communities where boreholes have already been provided, people have access to clean water to drink, to wash their clothes, to cook, to water their vegetables. Where there is no borehole, children often attend with dirty uniform as there may be little or no access to water, they always hope that they will have food at school, but the schools are often not able to provide a meal for the children as water is needed for cooking, the municipality tanker delivers very infrequently and there is no other source of water nearby. Life for these communities is really hard. Zisize in UK is focussing on providing food for feeding schemes and Ekukhanyeni Children's Foster Homes, as well as boreholes and seed so that people can self-sustain.

Susanna's Bat Mitzvah donations enabled Zisize to provide much needed boreholes, pumps and water tanks - the excited reaction of children and community members when seeing the water gush out was as if it were as precious as gold. Before this they were fetching water from pools where animals also drank and defecated. They were forced to use dirty and muddy water for cooking, drinking and washing clothes



One Gogo told how she used to leave home early in the morning to fetch water and would come back around 2pm with only one 25 litre container, to cook for the children. She said:-
"All is well now even if I die, I'll die in peace because I will know that my grandchildren will have water to cook and drink , I've never seen a tap in my life, I've never thought that my

area will have tap water, is it a dream? I don't know how we can thank this organisation."



Then she cried.

These communities say that if Zisize was a political organisation they would vote for Zisize! They invited a journalist to see what Zisize has done in their community, so Zisize was in the local papers and on Maputaland Community local Radio.

Zisize works holistically, one of its foci is health care. It was one of 15 NGOs nationwide funded by USAID through NACOSA, whereby Child and Youth care workers visit each household in their communities, providing health education and when necessary referring them to Zisize's nurse, who then conducts HIV counselling and testing. Such was Zisize's success (the only NGO to meet its US stipulated targets) compared with all the 14 other organisations, that its funding alone was extended by nine months so that the overall target for the 15 NGOs could be met by Zisize topping up for the rest. While I am not a big fan of quantity over quality, Zisize's staff managed to achieve both quality and quantity and made a difference to people's lives. The nature of Zisize's services i.e. the mobile testing often in people's own homes, the friendliness of Zisize staff, ongoing counselling and support and guaranteed privacy and confidentiality, promotes testing and has resulted in those testing positive to be started on anti-retrovirals at the earliest opportunity.

On the education front Zisize has begun working with six new primary schools. Its trainers have worked with 22 crèche leaders, 8 Grade R teachers and 10 Grade 1 teachers to improve the quality of their teaching in 2017. Such is the improvement in the crèches receiving this support that the Department of Social Development requested we train many more, which unfortunately is not possible without government funding to increase the number of trainers and to cover the huge transport costs monitoring entails, but is an indication that Zisize is both making a difference and being seen to do so.



In addition, a new project using tablets and pre-populated education programmes for English and maths has been started for Grade 4 pupils, again thanks to Susanna, whose Bat Mitzvah donation funded the first set of tablets. Children who were failing using conventional talk and chalk methods (still unfortunately used in Grades 4-7) are making huge progress using these programmes.



Zisize has supported a total of 46 students at Universities and colleges with fees/rent/ food allowance/books etc. this year thanks to the AALL Foundation, Solon Foundation and Nicky Lewis. Its career office has counselled 339 High School students or former high school students and the Career Expo, run jointly between Zisize staff and students from University of KZN and University of Zululand, reached 3993! I was touched to read the following:-

“We, the products of Zisize careers office, decided to form a Zisize Students Team called Lethokuhle at the University of Zululand to support each other and to encourage Ingwavuma high school students. When I was at school, I didn’t know about career guidance and how important it is, but I thank my friend who made me accompany him to Zisize office where I was motivated. I pulled up my socks after being told about different careers and the requirements for the career I wanted to apply for. There was no money at home so I knew even if I passed I wouldn’t be able to study at tertiary, I was only thinking of hunting for jobs after matric I didn’t mind about the pass percentage and levels I should obtain because I had no career in mind, I was just thinking of any job I could get. Passing matric was the end goal to me. Coming to Zisize made me realize that lack of money at home need not be a problem, the only thing was to work hard and pass matric, assistance is always there if I perform very well . I worked hard because I could see myself in tertiary after the guidance I got from Zisize I became more focused and I made it.

I didn’t even have a suitcase, bedding, pots, etc. I only had my school bag where I could put my things, but it was not a big deal because I didn’t even have a bed at home and no one had a suitcase at home .When I arrived at the university other students asked where my suitcases were, I told them that I was still going back home to fetch them. I wanted to look for a room first. I never went back home I was always telling them I was still busy while I was trying to get some of the things one by one with the support I got from Zisize. It was my secret that I had nothing and I didn’t want to tell anyone about it, I always pretended as if everything was ok.

I was chosen to be the chairperson of Lethokuhle and I really want the team to sustain so that we plough back to our community NGO Zisize. I’m not sure whether we all realize how lucky we were to get this opportunity. I thank Zisize I never even imagined that I would be in tertiary one day but here I am with an LLB!!!” Nqubeko Makhanya

Ekukhanyeni has at last been registered, though as a Cluster Foster Home (which does not bring in large scale funding) rather than as a Child and Youth Care Centre (which does). It

feels as if the decision was a financial one by the government department, but at least the children now have security, being cared for in a registered establishment means they cannot be removed far from their community. In addition the Department of Social Development is apparently seeking to run programmes to benefit cluster foster homes and is using Ekukhanyeni as its pilot, which again indicates that Zisize is valued by agencies.

UK former volunteers may remember Felowakhe, the young man who loved to make music? He sadly committed suicide this year when he failed to gain employment despite numerous applications. You may also remember Thobile (Thobi Thobi, Amanda's sister who were both at Ekukhanyeni as children) sadly she too died this year, shot by her boyfriend.



A huge loss, not only to her family but also to the whole community was Gugu, one of Zisize's best mentors who died this year. Her memorial service, organised by the school she was based at, brought an outpouring of grief but also reflections on the difference she and Zisize had made. The chairman of the School Governing Body said:-

"I wonder, whether what I've seen in this school and our community is happening exactly the same in other schools where Zisize is. Zisize how do you train your staff?- they are so motivated! I've been observing this girl, on Saturdays and Sundays she is at school, wherever you see her there will be children around her. We have never seen this in our community and we could see that this community was going to completely change. I used to hear people talking about this organisation and I really wanted to see what I used to hear about them, but I can tell more than what I've heard now because of this girl. She started working here last year October, the school had no food garden - there's a food garden now, there were no life skills clubs -there are life skills clubs now, there was no food for the OVC -there is food now, no one was visiting homes because of children's issues to be resolved-there is now , there were children without legal documents - they receive grants now, parents were not attending parents meeting-they attend now, health education, screening and HIV testing never happened at school - we see them coming to us, no one will say he didn't have money to go to the clinic, we get tested where we like to be tested. My daughter may your soul rest in peace. Zisize please do not leave this school. Ngiyabonga mina" (I thank you)



The little girl you see in the picture above with her mother and Gugu is HIV positive and she was dying of hunger and was not receiving her ARVs properly. Her mother was unable to care for her due to problems of her own, but the child found a loving mother in Gugu. She took over responsibility for giving the child her medication. She also trained one of the teachers, who was her friend, and between them they ensured this little girl had her medication at the same time each day. Without that help and food parcels this lovely girl would be gone. She cried bitterly at the funeral that she had lost her real mother. She is always the first one to arrive at school for food every Saturday and Sunday, her weight has improved since the feeding programme started at school as has that of all the other children, many of whom have Kwashiorkor. This programme was started by Gugu herself doing the cooking and insisting the programme could not wait til the following term due to the number of suffering children.

One of Zisize's mottos is "It is better to light a candle than to complain about the dark" - Gugu lit a candle in that community and we are grateful for her having been a Zisize ambassador.

Thank you to all the UK individuals who donate each month, to the groups of people in clubs, workplaces and churches, and to the UK Trusts who support Zisize - The Heaton Lee Memorial Trust. Thank you to the individuals and funders who support Zisize (Ingwavuma) Educational Trust. Without all of you, none of the above would be possible.

Our best wishes for a Happy Festive Season and a Healthy and Peaceful New Year. Siyabonga!

Niki

On behalf of Zisize's Trusts & Children

ZISIZE - The Heaton Lee Memorial Trust,
c/o Jeff Davies, Trustee, Rhoslyn, Merthyr Rd., Aberdare CF44 0YF.
Reg. Charity No. 1085470 Email Jeff at zisize@aol.com

&

ZISIZE (Ingwavuma) Educational Trust, PO Box 232, Ingwavuma 3968
Reg. nos. 048-137-NPO; IT/346/PMB & PBO no. 930018601 Email Niki.Lee@zisize.org

&

ZISIZE (Ingwavuma) Educational Trust, PO Box 232, Ingwavuma 3968
Reg. nos. 048-137-NPO; IT/346/PMB & PBO no. 930018601 Email Niki.Lee@zisize.org