

**ZIMBABWE FEEDING PROGRAM
- FARMING INITIATIVE**

(A Project of Highlands Presbyterian Church,
Zimbabwe)

**August 2009
Project Proposal**

In October 2008, Highlands Presbyterian Church felt that it was our responsibility, as the Church, to assist in meeting the needs of some of the poorest people in Zimbabwe who were facing a severe food crisis, caused by many factors including the economic situation in the country and poor rains.

Therefore, in addition to the food program run directly from the church for elderly folk living in town, we began providing food for 200 families amongst the Tonga people (in an area around Siabuwa in the Northwest of the country) and 150 families in the Mutoko area (East of Harare). We provided 30kg mealie meal and 6kg beans per family each month. Distribution has mostly been done through the churches and church networks, where we have established relationships for the past 5 - 8 years.

In May 2009 it was felt that, while the harvests were small in these places, the communities would have sufficient food to meet their needs until October. Therefore, we put a halt on food distribution for the past 4 months and intend to begin again in October.

As mentioned in our last update in May, we have also been planning to begin a farming initiative to assist the families, benefiting from food, to become self - sufficient again, so that by the end of next season (May 2010) they will no longer be dependent on us for this food aid.

The plan is to bring a selected group from each area into Harare, to take part in a training program called Foundations for Farming (used to be called Farming God's Way). This is basically a zero-tillage, conservation farming approach, based on the principles of God's Word, which has been proven to increase yields very significantly.

Each of these people will then become trainers and will be responsible for training and overseeing 10 of the beneficiary families in their area. The beneficiary families will each receive sufficient inputs for a 50m x 50m farming plot (i.e. seed and fertiliser).

In an effort to truly help the beneficiaries to become independent, and not expect that the food aid will be never-ending, part of the oversight will include strict assessment of their farming plots each month, and if they do not meet the standard, they will not receive the offered food aid. Although

this seems harsh, we believe it is essential to break the dependency cycle.

FINANCIAL BUDGET

Training costs

Training itself will cost \$54 per person (x 50) =
\$2,700

Transport to Harare - \$60 Siabuwa return (x 30) =
\$1,800

and - \$20 Mutoko return (x 20) = **\$400**

TOTAL FOR TRAINING = \$4,900

Inputs

Calculations have been worked on quarter hectare per benefiting family, which means working on inputs for a total of approximately 100 hectares.

Seed (maize or sorghum) 30kg/hectare -
\$1,500/ton (x30) = **\$4,500**

Fertilizer (D) 300kg/hectare \$580/ton (x 300) =
\$17,400

Fertilizer (AN) 300kg/hectare \$580/ton (x 300) =
\$17,400

Transport inputs to Siabuwa = **\$2,900**

Transport inputs to Mutoko = **\$750**

TOTAL FOR INPUTS = \$ 42,950

As with the Zimbabwe Feeding Project, the admin. staff and running costs will be covered by Highlands Presbyterian Church.

Current funding

We have already received **\$5,000** from a donor to cover the cost of the Training.

(Please note that this is above and beyond the monthly amount needed to maintain food assistance to these families through what is bound to be a severe food shortage in the outlying areas of Zimbabwe from October 2009 through May 2010. Our budget for the Zimbabwe Feeding Program is **\$70,000** of which about half is already available from funds given to us early in the year and not yet used.)

Cathy Stokes

Project Co-ordinator

Missions and Outreach Co-ordinator

******* This is the church that we in Polmont Old are in the process of twinning with. If anyone feels led to support them in this project, please let any member of the Outreach Team know, and we can arrange to transfer funds.**

**Doreen Baxter
Outreach Team Leader**