



# PAMO O.N.L.U.S.



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**NEWSLETTER N° 2 - JUNE 2009**

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## Editorial

While in the mountains, many of us have had the chance to admire imposing trees, old larches with a trunk so large that only several people holding hands and forming a chain can encircle them.

Not far away, among the rocks, there is another old larch, only this time it is much smaller. The seeds all came from an identical source: the only difference being the space available and the amount of soil for the roots to develop.

The same is true for the poor. There is nothing wrong with their DNA: they simply found themselves living in a society, which never gave them a favourable context to grow and develop.

It is from this simple observation that PAMO has developed the strategy so far adopted and will continue to guide us over the next years.

Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors who have always helped us enthusiastically, we have been able to realise many projects over nine years of activity.

- A Day Hospital with a Home Assistance service and a Mobile Clinic
- A school, where 450 children study and have their daily meals
- The Luanshya Family Home
- Villages wells, the Carpentry, the Mill, agricultural and rearing activities

And yet, what has been done so far is not enough! Now that we have helped create better living conditions, we must help them to become self sufficient in order to maintain and develop what has been created so far with PAMO's help.

We want to seek out creativity in everyone and help them to transform their gratitude towards us into the pride of being responsible for their own development.

We want to gradually shift, from us to them, the maintenance and further development of what has been created so far. This is the new challenge that PAMO has set itself.

It will not be an easy or a short term task but we have to be aware that if this is not achieved, then what has been built so far will continue to survive on charity with all the related uncertainties.



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# Luanshya Family Home

In Zambia, the HIV/AIDS mortality rate is extremely high: the average life expectancy is just above forty. This dramatic reality is the main reason behind the increasing number of orphans. Welcoming these children into a structure designed just for them, together with medical care, assistance and prevention, are the main solutions which have been adopted to tackle this tragedy. PAMO has opened in Luanshya a 'Family Home' to welcome orphans and abandoned girls.



The home, set up in a renovated house donated generously by an Italian businessman living in Zambia, allows these children to grow up in a better environment and meets all their educational needs. Once all the work on the house was completed, we were entrusted by the local welfare office with the foster care of 17 little girls – aged between 4 and 11 – who will be looked after by two of our 'mums'. The girls attend the Luanshya state nursery and school; the two mums – Harriet and Janet – help them after school with their homework. All the girls are doing very well and their school reports are among the best in the school.

Luanshya Family Home is sponsored by a group of benefactors who have guaranteed their support for several years. Without such a commitment it would not have been wise to foster the girls.

Having reached the maximum number possible to consider this group a family and because we do not want to create an orphanage, we are left with two options: leaving things as they are at the moment or creating a second family home.

The Luanshya welfare office is pushing for the creation of a second home, but we can't do it until we find another group of minimum 15 benefactors ready to make a commitment for at least 10 years.

If one of you readers would like to be promoter of such a group we could discuss together how to double the existing structure.

## our friends

**Sister Margaret Banda.** A nun of the Zambian congregation 'Daughters of the Redeemer' since 1980, she has been with us since 2000, when PAMO started to give its support in Zambia. Administrative manager until 2007, she has now become the Director General, an onerous task that Sister Margaret faces daily with a kind word for everyone but with iron discipline/a strong hand.



# Remote Child Aid

During our recent visit to Zambia, since the rainy season was over, we could visit the villages where the children sponsored by our organisation live.

We have almost reached the target of 50 children and we hope the task of supporting a larger number of children will be easier. This depends on the specific procedure we are carrying out: as with other projects we have chosen the most effective, although also the most difficult, way.

More clearly: we could have chosen a village or a school and supported all their children. We would have been able to help a lot of children and we would have fewer logistical problems. Instead we have identified the poorest children, irrespective of the distance between where they live and irrespective of how difficult it is to reach them. To give you an idea it took us almost 6 hours to visit 15 children in the Schimabala district and we were only able to spend a few moments with each child. We wonder how certain organisations can boast of sponsoring thousands of children. The difficulty in reaching some of the children's homes gives us an idea of their difficulties in attending school, in having access to drinking water and in getting hold of all the other bare necessities essential to build a dignified life.

When you come into contact with these children, you see the realities that cannot be tackled through food and medical aid alone: it is fundamental to educate the children's families as well - the grandmother who doesn't want to send her granddaughter to school because it's better and more profitable to make her work as a servant. The mother who receives a food package and feeds only her children from her actual partner, forgetting her own child from a previous relationship. These are only a few examples to show how complex the situation can be. I could not possibly have imagined what kind of commitment would be required to carry out such a project in a reliable and effective way. However, we are happy to be able to intervene, even if only superficially, in such a reality.



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A small inset photograph showing two children in a rural setting. One child is in the foreground, and another is slightly behind. They are outdoors with trees and a fence in the background.

These, and others, are our actions that make up a mosaic of help and assistance, starting from the poorest in a district where more than 11.000 people live. The real proof of how effective the approach we have chosen to adopt for our work is the joy and openness that we receive when we visit the villages.



**Veronica Siamuzwe.** Coordinator of the 'Home Based Care' project. It might appear to be an easy task but an important number of projects depend on her and she deals with them with outstanding efficiency and effectiveness and great serenity. The seminars, organised to train volunteers who will look after sick people in the different villages, as well as their coordination; the purchase of food and medicines; the programme for the fight against malaria; the support groups for people suffering from HIV/AIDS; the "Remote child aid" project, that aims to help vulnerable children, and now also the antiretroviral drugs distribution project, give us just a little idea of this woman's abilities and how precious her help is.

# Flash News

**Lukamantano School.** The first term has just ended together with the two-week holiday before the beginning of the second term. I would just like to remind you that in Zambia the school year starts in January and ends at the end of November. The school, which offers nine levels and a nursery section, has 426 pupils plus 38 grants for the best poorest pupils to continue studying for the 10th, 11th and 12th levels.

No news so far, but meetings keep being held, concerning the government's project to open a secondary school close to our one.

**Youth project.** A first group of 5 students, after passing the 12th level exams, began, with our incentive/encouragement, a business activity. They are growing tomatoes, rearing chickens for sale and they would also like to start producing prefab blocks for building purposes. Our hope is that the success of this first group will encourage others to join in or create different groups.

(In the picture: Andrew Khondowe, Teddy Njaluka, John Zulu, Lucky Musonda e Bruce Linyama).



**Agricultural activity.** While waiting for an agricultural development plan, the production devoted to the school and home assistance use continues. The soybeans harvest has been completed to be followed by that of the maize. The area devoted to banana cultivation has been extended. The rearing of 90 pigs and 35 cows is going well.

**Malaria project.** The project to prevent and fight malaria goes on. In the month of March 218 new people took part in the seminars 'How to defend yourself from malaria'. Of the 134 people checked 83 tests were positive and treatment was immediately provided.

**New investments** Of the three new projects being considered by the board: more homes for the employees, a school canteen and the purchase of a lorry. Priority has been given to the last one: a 4-5 ton lorry to transport materials for the carpentry and deliver their products, to transport maize and other products from the farm to the school and to transport building material and so on.

Such a lorry, used but in good condition, will cost around 18 000 Euros.

At present we do not have such a sum available but we hope our readers will help us with donations via either bank or post office accounts, quoting 'lorry purchase'. We are certain that, as always, you will help us solve this problem.

THANK YOU !!

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