



**afadu**

aid · for · africa · down · under

SUMMER 2010

# Come Alive!

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF AID FOR AFRICA DOWN UNDER (AFADU)



*This issue:*

**RELAUNCH OF  
COME ALIVE!**



**OFFICIAL OPENING  
LIRHANZO CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGE, ZIMBABWE**

Lirhanzo Children's Village (LCV) was officially opened on 10 June 2010 after eleven years of hard work by Ezelle and her team at Edenvale Ranch, the people of Chikombedzi and supporters of AFADU and other aid agencies (see the full story and more pictures on page 4-5)

**Julie Routledge***Takes a Break!*

Julie Routledge, known lovingly as Jules, is taking a break from the organisation she founded. In 2003, Jules "called in" on Ezelle Schimper in Southern Zimbabwe on her way back from London. Ezelle was trying to support HIV/AIDS affected orphans on her farm. Jules returned to Australia inspired by what she had experienced and with a clear vision of how she could make a difference. Board member Pam Harrison recalls: "I had the privilege of meeting with Jules at that time and listened in awe as she described how she was going to set up a charity to help the kids and the local community she had met".

This she surely did and in 2004, Aid For Africa Down Under (AFADU) was registered in Australia. Since then Julie has worked constantly and unwaveringly alongside many fellow Australians and people she has met around the world to fulfill the vision, the mission and the values of AFADU. Pam continues: "but with Jules there is always more. This was not just about AFADU and the kids and their communities of Africa who have been helped. She genuinely believes those who become involved and contribute in their unique and special way transform their own lives along the way".

From the Zimbabwe Project coordinators and local members of the Zimbabwean community through to AFADU's own volunteers, its worldwide supporters and the AFADU Board Members, Jules has shown us that through love, connection and a true belief anything is possible; humanity can make a difference and our lives are richer for the experience. Jules will still follow the work of AFADU with keen and committed interest and remain available as a sounding board for new ideas. The AFADU Board wishes to sincerely thank Jules for her vision and her inspiring leadership. She can rest easy in the knowledge that she leaves behind a vibrant and strong organisation which is determined to continue her vision.

**JULES' MESSAGE TO US ALL:**

Be that people are extraordinary, your teachers and your inspiration.

Be that anything is possible through love and connection.

Be the bridge over which others can cross and in joyful collapse, encourage them to create bridges of their own.

Invite others to stand beside you and BE ....BE ready for the moments that life unfolds.

My deep appreciation, love and respect goes to all of YOU who have shown courage, spirit and leadership.

**COME ALIVE!! RELAUNCHED**

This edition of Come Alive!! will be the fourth produced since AFADU was founded in 2004. The Newsletter is now being relaunched as our principal means of letting members and supporters know of the work of AFADU. In this edition we report on the wonderful news that Lirhanzo Children's Village in Zimbabwe, which is being supported by AFADU, has finally been registered by the Zimbabwean Government. We also take the opportunity to revisit all the Projects which AFADU has been supporting and give readers a chance to catch up on each Project, the achievements, how AFADU is involved and the current status of the Project. We hope that you enjoy Come Alive!! as much as we have bringing it to you. Please let us know of any suggestions you may have or an interesting story of your involvement with AFADU, by emailing or writing to [comealive@afadu.com](mailto:comealive@afadu.com)

**About Aid For Africa Down Under (AFADU)**

AFADU is a not-for-profit charity based in Australia which supports sustainable development projects in Africa, particularly Southern Zimbabwe, where a children's village and its surrounding communities and local hospital are provided with funds, support and donations from sponsors and donors from Australia and around the world. All funds go to support children, their carers and the communities in which they live. All premises, printing, media, legal and transport are donated by sponsors and volunteers so that there are no administrative costs. All the goods and funds received therefore go directly to the children and the community development projects that AFADU supports. Come Alive! is produced quarterly as an aid in providing sponsors, members and interested people with information about the work being done by the organisation and its supporters. Further information is available at AFADU's website at [www.afadu.com](http://www.afadu.com), by emailing [comealive@afadu.com](mailto:comealive@afadu.com) or writing to PO Box 3023 Redfern NSW, 2016 Australia.

*400 People Attend Opening*

Lirhanzo Children's Village (Lirhanzo in the Shangaan language means 'love') was the inspiration of Ezelle Schimper who some years ago began caring for orphaned children from the surrounding area of her family ranch in South Eastern Zimbabwe. Construction of the buildings began over ten years ago and was funded in part by friends of AFADU and in part by a German aid agency (IH).

There have been many challenges in achieving government approval for formal registration of the facility which was required before it could be legally occupied. Until now, over twenty orphaned children have been temporarily accommodated near the new Village site awaiting formal government approval. That approval was received in September 2009 and a colourful and happy occasion took place on 10 June 2010 when government dignitaries and local community members joined the children, their guardian mothers and Ezelle and her family and friends to celebrate the formal opening.

The new facility now houses 21 children from the ages of 1 day old to 16 years and is staffed by 4 guardian mothers. It consists of dormitories, a communal cooking and dining area. The Village is serviced with fresh water from the Mwenezi River which is also used to irrigate the Village vegetable plot and farm area which will eventually make the Village self-sufficient in food. In recent months a junior school has been established at the Village, attended by 120 children from LCV and the surrounding community.

The complex was built from local materials by people from the community as well as assistance from Ezelle's family and friends from Edenvale



Ranch. AFADU provided the necessary funds for the pumping of water from the river which not only gives the Village water irrigation for the Village vegetable farm but also irrigates the surrounding community farming pursuits. Sponsorship of AFADU orphaned children assists in the feeding, care and clothing of the children at Lirhanzo as well as the children's education.

The opening ceremony was a wonderful day for the community, for the children and especially for Ezelle and her friends and family who have worked so hard to achieve this milestone. The following photographs show how joyous the day was, with the children and the community providing a feast of traditional food, and plenty of singing and dancing to follow the formal speeches. Pam Harrison's blog entry (access from the AFADU home page) gives a lovely account of the festivities. The opening ceremony was specifically timed by Ezelle to coincide with the annual AFADU field trip so that AFADU could take part in the occasion.





**400 people!!**

including government ministers and representatives from regional authorities and the local community as well as the children and all who contributed to the establishment of the Village were there. The festivities following the official opening included preparing meat, cleaning pots and mixing the local sadza as well as much singing and dancing.



## Chikombedzi Hospital

Chikombedzi Mission Hospital is situated in the small town of Chikombedzi about 90 kms from the nearest large urban centre and 15km from the Lirhanzo Children's Village in South Eastern Zimbabwe. The hospital has a maternity ward averaging 76 deliveries per month, an operating theatre and an outpatient department which looks after the needs of up to 70 patients per day. The hospital, which was founded by a Methodist mission in 1939, also has a 30 bed pediatric ward, one male and one female general ward and a TB ward. There is a well equipped dental unit, a rehabilitation department and an area for waiting

mothers-to-be who come from their homelands prior to delivery to ensure the safety of their pregnancies. Some 2500 clients per month use the facilities of the hospital. AFADU has assisted the hospital through the direct donation of pharmaceuticals and hospital surgical and other equipment and directly supports the medical team of doctors.

### Nurse Training School

The hospital has a need for some 40 trained nurses but for a variety of reasons, mainly concerned with the remoteness of the hospital only 24 of these posts are currently filled. To overcome this chronic shortage, a nursing school building commenced about four years ago. It is expected that when the school is completed, an initial intake of 20 local student nurses will begin their training, with up to 120 at any one time. The establishment of the school is a 'bricks and mortar' project at present, with lecture rooms, library offices and dormitories needing to be constructed. AFADU has adopted this project and to date individual donors from Australia connected with AFADU have provided over \$25 000 for assistance with construction.



## Delphine's Story

*Delphine Archer and the company with which she is associated have been providing the children and the local community for some years with olive leaf extract, helping to build immunity to disease and infection. Delphine decided to join the AFADU 2010 field trip to see first hand the work being done by the people at Lirhanzo. As a direct result of her visit this year the board has approved her new project - the supply and installation of a grinding mill at a cost of \$15000. More on that in the next newsletter.*

I recently had the opportunity to visit Lirhanzo Children's Village which was a thrilling experience but a very steep learning curve for me. Having been involved with charity work for many years I wanted to see how things actually worked at grass roots level with AIDS orphans. At Lirhanzo I saw some amazing people giving so much love, hope and dignity to orphans and disadvantaged children and to the local community as a whole. We were all so encouraged to see the community eventually responding to the opportunities and friendship offered to them. Success has come only after a long and selfless

### HOW CAN I HELP?

The Chikombedzi Mission Hospital needs pharmaceuticals and medical equipment and the nursing school, an AFADU project, needs considerable funding for the construction of buildings to house nursing staff. Text books and nurses learning aids are also required. If you think you can help in any of these projects please contact AFADU on [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com)

struggle by Ezelle and her family and other genuinely dedicated people working in very adverse political and environmental circumstances. Capturing the vision of self-sustainability for Lirhanzo Children's Village and the broader community has empowered them to move forward. They have a long way to go but the journey is being made smoother with the help and guidance of groups like AFADU. It was my privilege to witness all that is going on over there. The children certainly enjoy their life in Lirhanzo - the Village of Love. Thank you AFADU and your wonderful supporters.

# Batsiranai Sewing Group (BSG)

AFADU has assisted in the creation of a vocational skills and training project around the design and manufacture of clothing and household items such as tablecloths and bed linens. The project was originally based on two hand wheeled sewing machines which were sent to Zimbabwe in an AFADU container and with the help of AFADU, the group was established under the management of local ladies and teenaged orphaned girls. The group now provides training and employment for many young women from the Children's Village and the local community and are now the main producers of the primary and secondary school uniforms for the local schools. The sewing group rents a shop front for its training and commercial premises in the township of Chikombedzi and funds that it raises through the sale of clothing and household items are spent paying its own costs as well as providing excess funds for the Lirhanzo Children's Village.



# Community Education

Sponsorship of Lirhanzo Village children provides not only food and shelter to the children of the Village but also assists in the children's education. The Village has now established a primary school in a building on the Village site and educates children from the surrounding community on a fee paying basis or goods and labour in kind from the community. The school is now providing early education for 120 children. LCV provides and trains four teachers to the school and the Zimbabwe Department of Education another four. The Community Education Fund also provides opportunities for the older students not attending school, teachers, community members wanting to be teachers and Village carers and workers to take on further studies eg teacher training, sewing, woodwork, business management, through the Zimbabwean colleges.



The photographs show children attending the temporary school at the Village and primary school dressed in graduation gear manufactured by the sewing group.

# Trixie's Story

Once a year in June a group from AFADU head to Zimbabwe for the annual field trip – which is wonderful because we can see first hand how the girls at BSG are coming along. All reports say that times have been tough especially since their in house tutor, Mrs Chamuka, moved on to another town some months back. So a visit from the AFADU bunch was most welcome. Julie, the founder of AFADU and a woman of boundless energy, spent some quality time with the BSG crew and together they mapped out the next steps in BSG's progress. One fantastic idea to generate income and clear some of the older stock was to have a 30 June sale. Incredibly they had a HUGE day and made more money in the one day than they do in a month! Following is an excerpt from a letter sent to us by the ever inspirational Margaret Mutero:

*“Just to let you know, we had a \$2 sale on the 30th of June as per our arrangement. The sale was really fantastic and we made quite a big difference. The sales for that day alone were \$724, 50. From this cash, we paid our rentals for July to September, Vendors' license up to September. We also have put money aside to buy two new machines.”*

Margaret is not only the supervisor of the orphans at Lirhanzo Children's Village she is also responsible

## HOW CAN I HELP?

The Sewing group needs equipment such as sewing machines, overlockers, machine attachments, shears and other sewing equipment to assist with the training of local girls and the production of clothing for sale. If you are a UK or US citizen you can donate directly through Global Giving, an International Fundraising NGO. Your donation is Tax Deductible: <http://www.globalgiving.co.uk/pr/2600/proj2594a.html> or for more information please contact AFADU at [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com) or visit our website.

for getting BSG off the ground with me back in 2005. I actually haven't been back to Zimbabwe since that time so Margaret and I keep our bond strong through good old fashioned snail mail. So, you can imagine my surprise when at 6am one Saturday in late July the phone rings. It was Margaret. She was on a day trip to Chiredzi which is 3 hours drive from Chikombedzi. She tells me she had saved some money so she could make the call. To say I was blown away is an understatement really! We had a very quick chat and although there is so much to catch up on it was like being a rabbit in the head lights. I could barely think! One thing she did make very clear was how grateful she and her crew at BSG are for the love and support AFADU gives. So, Thank you from Margaret!



## HOW CAN I HELP?

Child sponsorship is the most direct way to assist the education of the children of Lirhanzo. Full details of sponsorship arrangements can be found on page 10.



# AFADU Water Project

The Lirhanzo Children's Village is approximately 3km from the Mwenezi River which is the closest source of water required for the Village and the livestock and farming activities needed to make the Village self sufficient. In 2007 AFADU funded the installation of an improved water system, consisting of new pumps, irrigation lines and water tanks from the river to the Village

It was a feature of the installation that irrigation would also be provided to the farming communities between the village and the river. The water system was finally installed in 2008 and now provides water for farms housing over 170 people in addition to the children at the Village. Crops grown are maize, wheat and green vegetables and tomatoes.



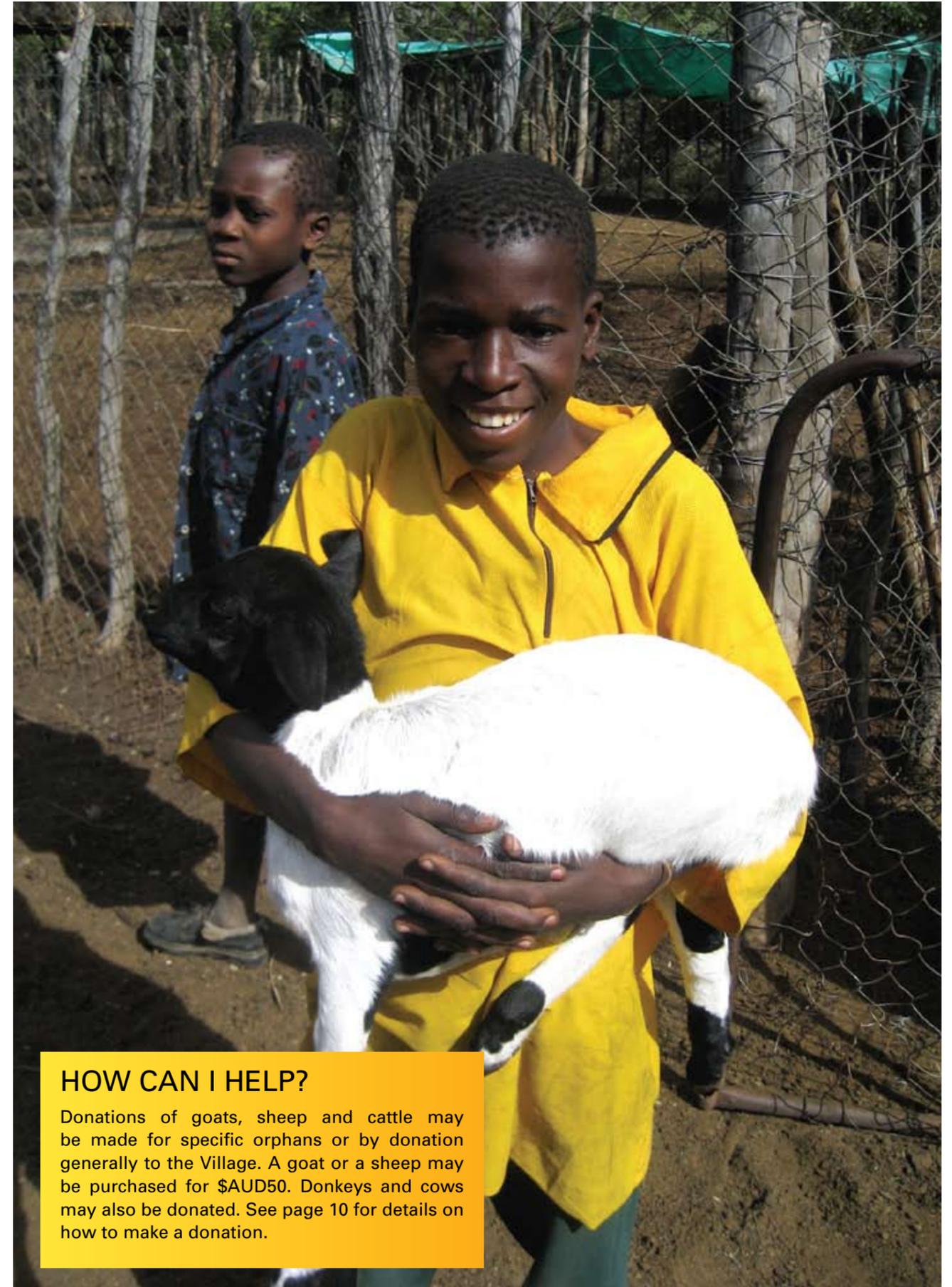
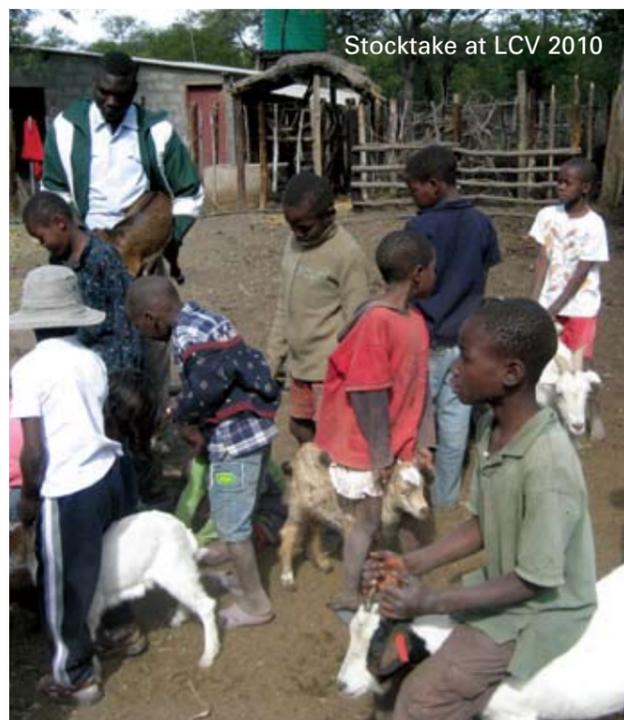
# Animal Bank

Lirhanzo Children's Village owns a number of farm animals which provide for the children's dietary needs as well as a source of training in animal husbandry and business training.

The Village employs 6 agricultural workers (including two of the orphans who are no longer part of the education program) to care for the animals. A small part of sponsorship funding is allocated to this program.

During this year's AFADU field trip, a stocktake showed that the Village cared for 65 goats, 23 kids, 18 sheep, 6 lambs and 17 cows.

Although many animals belong to the Village, well over half are owned by individual orphans. These have been donated to the orphan by Australian sponsors and are important as an asset for orphans when they grow up and leave the program or are married, in which event they take the animal with them.



**HOW CAN I HELP?**  
 Donations of goats, sheep and cattle may be made for specific orphans or by donation generally to the Village. A goat or a sheep may be purchased for \$AUD50. Donkeys and cows may also be donated. See page 10 for details on how to make a donation.





## Containers of Love

One of AFADU's major activities since its inception has been the collection of goods and materials in Australia and the shipment of these goods to Zimbabwe, via shipping containers, to Durban and then by road crossing the South African-Zimbabwe border to Chikombedzi. This is a major logistical feat requiring not only the donation of goods such as bolts of material and sewing equipment for the sewing group, medical supplies, wraps (hand made knitted blankets) and mosquito netting but also the collection of these goods from all around Australia and the packing of the containers for transport.

Container number 12 has just been loaded and is ready for transportation to Zimbabwe. A series of emails from Mike gives a wonderful summary of what is done by volunteers, the sort of goods packed and how much work goes in to the whole process of collection, packing and transport. It also shows the process is a lot of fun for those involved!



The goods are unpacked and distributed in Zimbabwe

### HOW CAN I HELP?

AFADU coordinates the collection of goods and equipment ranging from bicycles to sewing machines to blankets and hand made clothing which are able to be used by the orphanage, hospital and sewing group. If you think you have unwanted equipment that may be useful please email [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com) and arrangements will be made for collection.

PLEASE NOTE: all work is carried out by volunteers and container and shipping are provided by company and individual donation. These have been shipped to Zimbabwe via containers and all have been successfully delivered.

## Mike's Story

**AUGUST 2010:**

Hi everyone. We are now looking to crank things up for the next container so we are looking for packers. We have 25 boxes of clothes ex Melbourne and birthing kits went yesterday. More goods to be received are Olive Extract from Queensland, Wraps from Betty, baby strollers from Dezi, goods from Anne and cloth bolts from Rushcutters Bay. Please let me know if you can join in.

**17 AUGUST:**

The packing is on for this Saturday as the first packing day for the 12th container. We will pack till we get tired, probably around 3.30. Bring drink and a sandwich. I have the labels, marking pens, big poly bags and tape.

**22 AUGUST:**

Update on packing container 12. Tracy arrived after 1 1/2 hours and two train changes - how's that for dedication! Betty and Bob dropped off 10 WRAPPED WITH LOVE bags of wraps. Betty stayed to pack. Shortly after Sandy arrived and then Peter. All team members had packed before so we were like a well oiled machine within 5 minutes.

**12 SEPTEMBER:**

Just a reminder that the second packing day is due on the Saturday coming. The Olive Leaf Extract and the goat drench are at home ready to take down."

**19 SEPTEMBER:**

Packing day 2 went very well, the crew being Erin and Shane, Heather, Peter and Helen and Betty. We managed to pack all the outstanding goods we have received except for the furniture that is held in the second container. We are almost exactly half full and with the goods from Dezi and the furniture we have it should be full.

*But we had a hiccup. We packed everything away and were ready to say our goodbyes and close the containers when Erin noticed her jumper missing!!!! What colour? What did it look like? Helen to the rescue. One look at the meticulous manifest and she recognized the box number, a scramble over the tightly packed boxes, a swift cut with a sharp knife and entry was gained to box 132. We are not sure whether it was really Erin's, or she had an eye out for it and wanted to see how good our system of recovery would be!! A good day and once again thanks to all.*

## Child Sponsorship & Donations

### HOW CAN I HELP?

AFADU currently has a range of ways you may help the children of Lirhanzo and the surrounding community.

### SPONSOR A CHILD

Full sponsorship of the care and upbringing of a single child including the operational running of the Village (eg wages for carers and management), education, food, health and medical care, is \$900 per annum. AFADU invites sponsors to share with friends and family and contribute this amount in supporting a child and in doing so supporting and connecting the children back with the community at large. Through sponsorship funds opportunities are generated for the community and its children to grow and eventually be self supporting.

Contact: Emily O'Donnell at [emily.odonnell@gmail.com](mailto:emily.odonnell@gmail.com)

### ANIMAL BANK

AFADU supports the Lirhanzo Animal Bank program which provides goats, sheep, cattle and donkeys for the Village. Sponsors may donate an animal to a specific orphan by providing \$50 for the care and upkeep of a goat. Animal donations are important as a source of training in animal husbandry as well as food. Contact: [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com)

### SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

AFADU welcomes donations from individuals and businesses to help fund specific programs, many of which are demonstrated in this newsletter and on our website. Contact: [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com)

### GENERAL DONATIONS

If you would just simply like to make a donation, we welcome one off or regular contributions of any size. These can be made via Pay Pal, Direct Deposit or by cheque and you will find all that information on the website.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

More details about the work of AFADU are available at our website: [www.afadu.com](http://www.afadu.com), email [info@afadu.com](mailto:info@afadu.com) or you can write to PO Box 3023 Redfern NSW, 2016 Australia.



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## Chipo's Story

*Dear David and Susie,*

*I am happy to write this letter to you to saying thank you for your photos you sent me. I am now in level 1 and am doing well in school. How are you? (Chipo attached a drawing of a girl and a neat house with a garden and a great big red heart.)*

When I first met Little Chipo – as she was called then – it didn't take long to realize how beautifully she resembled her name. Chipo means Gift in Shona. She was standing in front of the class in the orphanage schoolroom, singing the English children's song 'I'm a Little Teapot' for the littlest orphans. She had perfected all the hand and body movements and sang, head tilted back and with such enthusiasm and joy, no one would have guessed her short life had been so lacking in the 'gift' most of us take for granted – full sight.

Little Chipo never knew her father and her mother was too ill to care for her. Children with physical disabilities are a burden on relatives struggling to survive in rural Zimbabwe. Although Little Chipo could see with one eye, she needed extra love so, of course, Ezelle took her in and gave her the gift of a better chance in life.

Since then, Little Chipo has grown into a beautiful young girl, progressing well in her studies and is soon to have a cosmetic eye operation. David and I are privileged to help – only \$900 a year to see she completes her schooling- and to ensure she continues to sing with her big heart.

*My favourite game is netball.*

*My best friend is Everjoy*

*When I am big I want to be a police woman.*

*Lots of love*

*From Chipo*



CHIPPO 2006



CHIPPO 2010





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