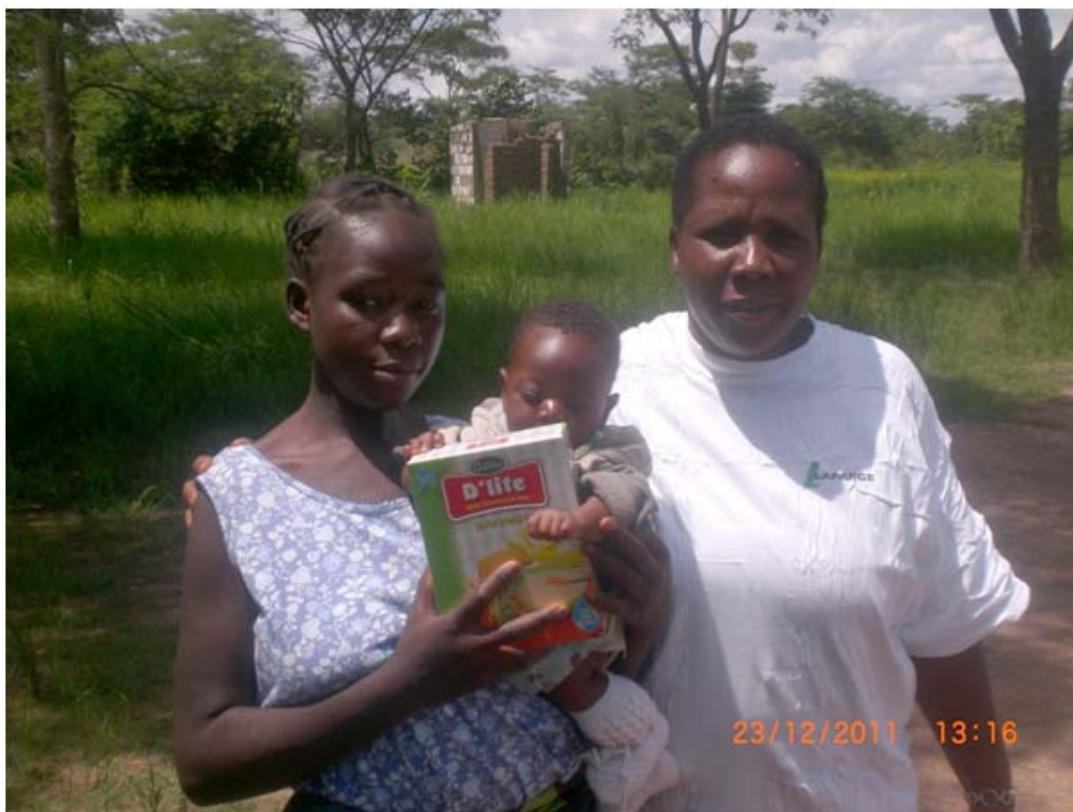


MERCY TOUCH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

ZAMBIAN CHAPTER

FEEDING PROGRAM REPORT NOVEMBER 1-DECEMBER 31 2011



Mercy Touch Mission International Local staff giving support to a care taker on how to prepare Dlite porridge.

Summary.

The report describes the feeding program activities for the month of November and December 2011. The program has a total number of 170 under five children of whom 35 are underweight and 135 are vulnerable children. The program has continued to receive referrals from the community, Growth Monitoring Point and the Local Rural Health Centre (Kavu Rural Health Centre) run by the Catholic Church in conjunction with the Ministry of Health Zambia.

The Feeding program has continued to make progress and these are the achievements that were made during the period under review (1st November to 31st December 2011)

1. Official launch of the Feeding Program.
2. Home visits /Technical support.
3. 10 Income Generating Activities Beneficiaries were identified.
4. Christmas Party for the Feeding Program Children.
5. 30kg of Soya Beans has been planted as planned.
6. Weekly Feeding and Distribution of Soya flour

Program management.

1. Official Launch of the Feeding Program

The Feeding program launch took place on the 11th of November 2011 this was a step further in the Feeding program implementation because it gave more assurance and confidence to the community about the future of the program. The launch was attended by many well wishers from all walks of life including NGOs, representatives from District Health Office of Ministry of Health, Local Clinic, Churches and Key People from the surrounding area of the Mercy Touch Farm. They were also some representatives from the area member of Parliament that is the area councillor and his secretary. The wife to the area Member of Parliament was the Guest of honour in place of her husband who was away on National duties.

The guest of honour gave an encouraging speech and message of appreciation on the developments Mercy Touch Mission International is implementing in the area improving the lives of the underprivileged in the community. She was very grateful to the package of the Feeding Program. The program involves weekly Feeding and giving out soya flour for home use and the small loans which the caretakers will be benefiting to improve the economy in the households, so as to look after the vulnerable children in a better manner than before. She liked the strategy of passing on system of Loans because it has a way of continuity even after the funder with draws. In view of this she pointed out to the caretakers to ensure that they abide to the policies of the program if they have to eradicate poverty in the area.

The other speaker was Sandra Butters who represented the team from Canada. She seemed very excited to be in Zambia and especially to be present at the Launch of the long awaited feeding program for the underweight and vulnerable children in old Kaloko. She started by greeting the crowd in the local language of the area ;" Mulishani boonse" and everybody answered "bwino" and she went on to conveying the greetings from the people of Canada, more especially those who have a heart to work with Mercy Touch Mission International, helping the orphans and vulnerable children in society worldwide including Zambia. Sandra indicated how happy she was to be present at the launch with the team from Canada and wished the children good health and God's blessings. To the caretakers she encouraged them to work as team with the local team if the program is to be successful. Sandra said, " If you are given five chickens and do not pass them on to the next person that means they is already a problem in the system because you the initial beneficiary has blocked the system and there is no continuity. She emphasized that the Feeding Program was not for any of the invited guests to benefit but for the vulnerable children they take care of.

2. Home visits /Technical support.

This has been an ongoing process because it is the only way of indentifying challenges the caretakers are facing in managing the children in the community. Caretakers are more open to talk with the staff of Mercy Touch Mission when they are visited in their homes. The Technical support given during home visits is according to the problem identified, e.g. looking after an underweight child, parenting an orphaned child etc. The challenge that is still being faced is transport especially distant places like those near the Rural health centre and the area near the military camp.

Success story

During one of the home visits, a baby boy Angle was identified just before the official launch in November 2011. This is a baby who was born from an HIV positive mother. He was not being breast fed from birth due to the HIV status of his mother. Due to poverty levels as explained earlier, the baby had literally nothing to feed on until he was met by our visiting team and their hearts were moved and treated the situation as an emergency. The baby was bought 12 tins of formula milk at once. The mother wept for joy, and she narrated that she did not know where the next feed for her baby would come from on that particular day. She went on to say this was GOD who connected her. A follow up interview was conducted this January when the baby was being assessed how he was growing. I encouraged her that God is good and in his time he makes everything beautiful and that is exactly what happened to her baby. Angel is now taking milk and a very light porridge which is already mixed with milk. The mother just adds it to previously boiled water and it is ready to eat. The baby is growing well and his health is been acknowledged by the clinic. This has really encouraged us as a team. We give glory to the Lord for this life that was saved.



Miracle Baby Angel with her mother and the baby porridge he's taking now.

3. 10 Income Generating Activities Beneficiaries were identified.

10 care takers have been identified as initial beneficiaries for the small loans in form of cash /Kind. The guidelines will be followed as indicated in the project implementation plan. The key message to all that would be beneficiaries is to pass on to another person after a stipulated time according to the policy. It is our hope that these would be given in the first quarter of 2012 as per planned budget.

4. Christmas Party for the Feeding Program Children.

This was successfully held on the 23rd of December 2011; about 150 children were in attendance. It was a time of merry making, singing and dancing .The children received gifts, and food included biscuits, drinks and sweets; also had rice and chicken. The few children interviewed said they enjoyed themselves at the party and they are wishing they could be having such parties at the end of each year. Some children did not make it; the parents had gone to the fields because Christmas time is also time for farming.

Mama Regina shared the message on the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ to the children and the caretakers. They were touched and promised to share the message at least to one or two people during this Christmas season.



- 1) **Highlights of the Christmas party - the children are simply saying “thank you to all our supporters “**

5. 30kg of Soya Beans has been planted.

We are very grateful to the support that we have been receiving from our brothers and sisters in Canada, but never-the-less we would like to slowly start reducing on the budget for the Feeding program by growing soya beans ourselves. The soya beans are **the main packed** in the Feeding program which is popularly known as the **SOYA GOLD** due to nutritional value it has. It is locally grown, easy to prepare and it is well known by the people themselves and it is these soya beans which are widely used in programs against malnutrition. That is why we just want to grow more and more of it, so that we kick out the Malnutrition around the Mercy Touch Community.

This farming season we have planted 30 kg. of soya beans; each care taker was given a portion of land to plant and to take care of throughout the farming season. This was received with gladness as one care taker proudly said “it is our children who will be feeding on these soya beans so we need to contribute a little other than just waiting to receive all the time.” It is our hope that after May 2012 we will be able to have our own Soya beans.



The care takers are planting soya beans.



2) Highlights of the Christmas party.

6. Weekly Feeding and Distribution of Soya flour.

The weekly Feeding days have continued on Fridays and are receiving referrals from the Growth Monitoring Point, the rural health Centre and Community, while some vulnerable /orphaned children are indentified during home visits in the community. The program has just been in existence for four months and it has already started improving the lives of underweight children.

7. Challenges.

1. Transport for home visits

8. Activities for first quarter

2. Meeting with community leaders
3. Weekly feedings
4. Home visits
5. Meeting with initial beneficiaries of the Income Generating Activity.(IGA)
6. Support to IGAs.
7. Monitoring of the Soya Field.

Report compiled and written by Mary Sichula.