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**March Update**

1 message

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# Sparrow Stories

TRANSFORMATIONAL TEACHING IN ZAMBIA

March 2025

*"In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth  
or step back into safety." Abraham Maslow*

Dear Friends,

By the time I'd packed my bags to head back home to Zambia, I'd had opportunity to share with many of you about the new roles and responsibilities I was excited to be embarking on. The unknowns regarding what I'd be doing, that I'd lived with for months last year, were behind me and I was ready to hit the ground running.

What I'd underestimated was the time and 'figuring out' involved in navigating a transition from one place, role and organisation to another. These last six weeks, since coming back to Zambia, have reminded me that change, even when desired, prayed for and prepared for, brings joy as well as an element of

uncomfortableness. A lot of friends are asking 'are you settled?' My natural inclination is to quickly get out of this liminal space, but in reality, I know that this is a valuable time, requiring the continued choice to keep stepping forward into the opportunities for growth it offers.



Goodbyes and hellos

## Transitioning from Mukinge to Lusaka

Lusaka is the capital city of Zambia, with a population of approximately 3.2 million. By contrast to living in the small rural community of Mukinge, where I was known by name (or my movements could be traced as my car was recognised!), I have a sense of anonymity in Lusaka – there are pros and cons to both!

Within Mukinge/Kasempa everything is close and some of the only vehicle queues are when motorcyclists wait for fuel to arrive at the filling station. In Lusaka, traffic builds quickly in the mornings and afternoons. My 13 Km drive to the SIM office takes about 35 minutes. Some places and parts of the city are known to me but others are unfamiliar and I'm slowly trying to learn the networks of roads that connect one place to another.



Mukinge has lots of wide open green spaces to go for walks, whereas Lusaka is an urban landscape where you are more likely to walk round one of the many shopping malls that have sprung up in recent years! It's a enjoyable change to be able to go out for coffee or to the supermarket just round the corner when needed, rather than having to do a 'big shop' every couple of months. A big shop would be no use in this current climate of loadshedding power. We typically get an average of four hours of power per day, at different times each week, which doesn't really keep the fridge cold!







Driving into Kasempa district, the extended wall fence, new water tank and speaking to the children in assembly

I drove back to Mukinge a few weeks ago to pack my belongings to visit friends and Mukinge Hill Academy. I enjoyed reconnecting with the pupils and staff. I was really encouraged to see how well Mr Chilebela is leading the school and the developments since I'd left last April. I felt I'd said my goodbyes last year, but seeing how God has continued to provide for the school and having an



assurance that I am where God wants me to be, gave me peace in the final leaving.



Friends helping to pack, load the truck and ready to unpack again in Lusaka

## Transitioning from Head Teacher to facilitator and co-ordinator

My whole career as a teacher has been ruled by timetables and punctuated by school bells! As Head Teacher at MHA, there was a constant background buzz of teaching and learning. My days were busy with a continuous flow of people through the office and many demands on my time. So far in my two new roles,

I have been working mostly from home, where it's quiet, interacting with colleagues through online platforms and managing my own time.

As lead facilitator of the TeachBeyond Zambia Sparrow project, I am helping to register schools that are interested in being part of the next training cohorts. I have been continuing with weekly online onboarding where I study and have opportunity to ask questions about the Sparrow teacher training curriculum we will deliver. If all goes well, we hope to begin training in Livingstone and Lusaka in mid-April/early May.

In my SIM role as project co-ordinator, I'm about to receive orientation and hand over. I've been helping two SIM colleges develop their strategies and budgets to facilitate ministries in theological education and trauma healing.

## Transitioning from SIM to SIM *and* TeachBeyond

So far, working with two organisations is going well as both have understanding of the need for flexibility. I have two supportive supervisors who have been available for my questions in getting started and others within SIM and TeachBeyond who meet to pray and provide training online.

I meet with the SIM Lusaka team on Friday mornings for prayer and afterwards spend time with colleagues working on project co-ordination. The remainder of my work has been from home (or occasionally a café if I need power!). When teacher training has started, I will then be able to do follow up visits in Lusaka schools.



## SIM Together as One entity leaders gathering in Cyprus.

Having greater flexibility in working hours, allowed me to accept the opportunity to be part of a gathering of about 150 SIM leaders in Cyprus at the end of February. The theme was 'Together as One' and there was a real sense of unity as we worshipped and prayed together and discussed key questions which affect our organisation. I enjoyed the opportunity to connect with and learn from leaders serving in many diverse contexts.

I have a further online orientation with TeachBeyond in April which will help me understand the organisation better. I'm excited to continue to get to know new colleagues who share a similar passion for transformational teaching.

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## Prayer Points

### Praise God for:

- Smooth travel and a great welcome back to Zambia.
- The opportunity to learn from leaders at the SIM Together as One entity leaders gathering.
- A safe drive back to Mukinge and the logistics of transporting my belongings to Lusaka all working out.
- The joy of seeing God's faithfulness in seeing MHA continue to

### Pray for:

- The ability to continue to adapt to a new work environment, managing my own time effectively.
- The ability to form strong relationships with the school leaders and the teachers I will train through TeachBeyond.
- Wisdom to understand the SIM project co-ordinators role and that I could support colleagues well.



- develop under Mr Chilebela's leadership.
- The start I have been able to make in online training and orientation to my roles.
  - energy and courage to keep stepping forward into new opportunities and embracing the learning in these.
  - The right staff as they replace three teachers deployed to the government.

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Thank you for supporting me and for keeping me in your prayers. I'd love to hear from you too (feel free to reach out to me using any of the contact methods below).

Love Claire



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