

Written by Gladys Mbiri (a Social Science student at Lusaka University)

### **FAMILIES INTERVIEWED in Ng'ombe compound.**

The first home that I visited was Gift Tembo's house. Gift is an orphan who stays with his grandparents. His father died when he was 2 years then both him and his mother fell ill, looking at the situation, his grandmother decided to get him and he has lived with his grandparents ever since and is now 9 years old. His grandparents do not work and making ends meet is quite a challenge. Due to this, Gift does not have shoes, his clothes are not in good condition and he does not have any beddings. To make matters worse, he sleeps on a finished reed mat. (below is a picture of Gift and the reed mat he has for a bed)



He only eats one meal in a day and that meal is not even a nutritious one. Before the school was opened, gift just used to sit home and help with the chores around there 1 roomed house. But now thanks to the Anglican children's programme, Gift has the chance to get an education and better his life. As at now, he is able to speak a bit of English and will probably learn more as he goes on with school and has learnt to write his name. This program has eased the burden on his grandmother because she does not have to worry on how she'll take little Gift to school. She's also happy that at least gift is given food at school. Now she just has to think of the 7 other children that she takes care of.



Below is Swagger Musoka. She is a 14 year old girl and stays with her single mother. She has 4 siblings and her mother has no job.

Swagger's family is taken care of by her elder brother who is a shop keeper. She eats one meal per day and sleeps in what looks like a sitting room in a three roomed house. Her mother is very grateful that swagger is able to go to school for free and also is given meals at school.

Dora Banda, an 8 year old girl lives with her widowed mother. Her father passed away in 2009 and since then her family has faced hardships. So to make ends meet, her mother sells vegetables. She lives in a one roomed house with her mother and her 10 year old



*(This is Dora standing at the door of her home and at the right are the plates she eats from )*

elder brother. Little Dora walks over 1 km to get to school but that doesn't bother her, all she wants is to get an education. Her mother shows her gratitude to the school for giving her a place and didn't know how to express her gratitude to the Anglican Children's programme for the service rendered to her daughter.

Brian Tembo is 8 years old and lives with a single mother. His mother does some peace work of washing people's clothes in order to provide for him. As he is not an orphan but just vulnerable, he is required to pay a monthly contribution of K10,000. To most people, that is a very mother, it's too much money and has difficulties paying. So as my colleague and I approached Brian's house, the mother thought we had come to demand for the monthly contribution as she has not paid for months.

Despite this, Brian has not been chased from school or forced to pay the contribution as any other school would do. Brian is still given food at school during the feeding days. Mostly Brian has 2 meals per day but the first meal is no different from the second meal because what he'll have for supper is what is stored up from lunch. He has few clothes and sleeps with 5 children in one small room. Brian's mother is very grateful to the school primarily because Brian is still allowed to be in school despite him not having paid the monthly contribution for months and also Brian is still given food during feeding days at school.

Having one meal per day, no shoes, no proper clothing or beddings to sleep in is a daily reality for these kids. Clearly, one can tell that these children are living in poverty. It is in these poor, forgotten zones of Lusaka where the worst effects of social and economic exclusions are visible. Nov. 2012

