



# COMMUNITIES WITHOUT BORDERS

## ANNUAL REPORT 2010





## President's Message

For at least 5 years our partners in Zambia have been asking us to help in providing psycho-social support for our children. It is well understood that many of our children come from very tragic backgrounds with loss of parents, dire poverty and many forms of abuse. Sometimes the children even blame themselves for their situation. They need support, and we have been eager to respond to this call for help, but until 2010, we really had no idea of how to go about it.

In 2010 we were fortunate to have several experienced social workers travel with us to Zambia. Professor of Social Work, Wendy Haskell accepted the challenge of responding. At a conference on narrative therapy in Vancouver she discovered an intervention called "The Tree of Life". This had been created originally in Australia for supporting aborigine children, but has since been extended to working with both adults and children in situations of disaster and severe deprivation around the world. Indeed, a South African social worker named Ncube adapted the Tree of Life for supporting AIDS orphans with some success in Zimbabwe. Wendy led an intensive research and training effort to bring this tool to our communities in Zambia. It was a resounding success. Communities Without Borders is able to accomplish so much with limited funds because of the incredible talents, resources, and commitment of our volunteers!

I am pleased to report on the success of the tutoring program that was initiated last year.

This program was created to help students in the seventh and ninth grades prepare for the end of year national exams. Students must pass these exams to be able to continue to the next level in school. In 2009 a total of 60 CWB-supported students participated in the tutoring program. This year that number increased to 116 students. Furthermore, while the percent of girls and boys passing the seventh grade exam was about even both in 2009 and 2010, only about one quarter of the students progressing to tenth grade were girls. I am especially pleased to report that in 2010 we have made great strides in girl education. In fact the number of girls passing the ninth grade exam rose from only 3 in 2009 to 23 girls in 2010, representing 44% of the total.

Once again each child was awarded a certificate, a photo showing the award, and Wilfred Chilangwa's book on how to avoid sexually transmitted diseases. Personally congratulating these students at the awards ceremonies continues to be one of my most gratifying experiences each year. I am committed to continuing this program.

With the tremendous support of our volunteers and contributors Communities Without Borders continues to make great strides in the quality of education available to these children. Thank you for your support!

— Richard N Bail, MD, MPH  
President and Founder  
Communities Without Borders

*Cover photograph (center): Richard N. Bail, MD, MPH, Founder and President of CWB, and Molly Samakai, Executive Director of SWAAZ, present award certificate and book to a proud student for passing her exams.*



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of CWB is to educate orphans and other vulnerable children, primarily in Africa, in order to nourish hope for a better future for them, society and the world.

Our approach fosters building ongoing community-to-community relationships at the grassroots level in order to increase the quality educational opportunities for these children.

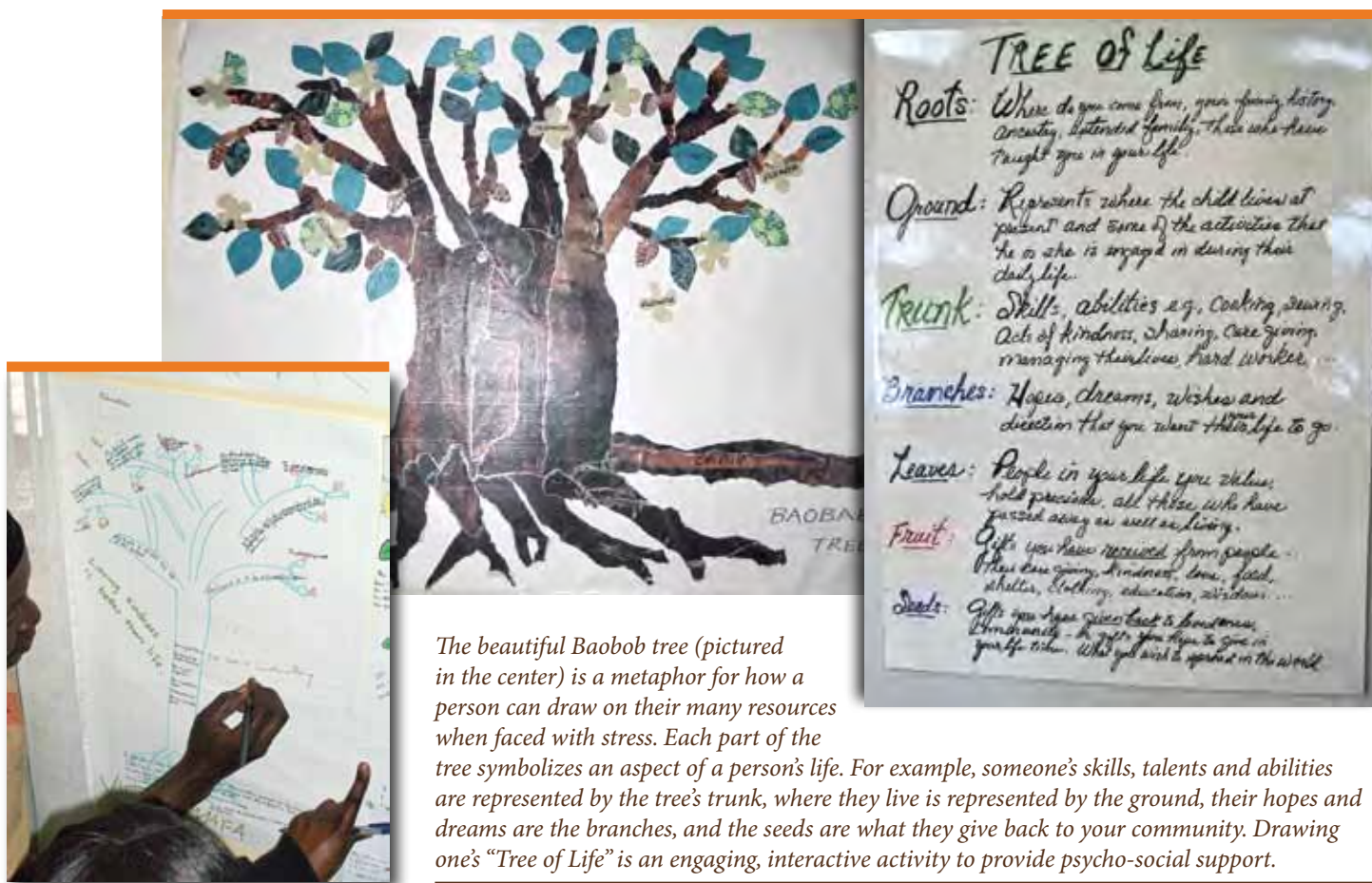
## The Tree of Life

The Tree of Life helps to build resiliency in children. It relies on the metaphor of a tree whose roots are embedded in the culture, language, family and place of origin of the child. The trunk represents the strengths that the child manifests. The branches are the caregivers and mentors from whom the child has learned. The seeds are what the child hopes one day to give back to the community. So, the child has created a visual narrative of her own life. Then, everyone's tree is posted on the wall and the resulting forest becomes a metaphor for a community of support. The groups discuss how the trees may respond to new stresses, and the leader asks: "Is it the fault of the trees when they are beset by drought?" Of course, it is not the fault of the tree that circumstances have become adverse, nor, by extension, is it the fault of an orphan child to have suffered abuse by adults. This process is very liberating for the participants and identifies a community of support for future stresses.

Wendy Haskell and her team conducted two day-long workshops, one for the leaders of our partner groups in Zambia and the

second for about 25 of the volunteer teachers in our community pre-schools. Both groups responded with great enthusiasm. Particularly the volunteer teachers resonated with this intervention as most of them had grown up as children under stresses similar to those faced by their own students now. They left the workshops eager to learn more and to begin to use this technique with the students.

In this coming year 2011, we have been asked to conduct Tree of Life exercises in 4 different community schools in 4 different squatter compounds. At first we will do this with only a few children and their teachers, and we will do our best to learn how we can effectively and efficiently extend this form of psycho-social support to all of our children in the future. We hope to develop a cadre of future CWB travelers to Zambia who can train and facilitate psycho-social support, including some new models of expressive therapies, which Wendy Haskell has suggested. It is our intention to empower the teachers themselves in order to provide psycho-social support for our children.



The beautiful Baobab tree (pictured in the center) is a metaphor for how a person can draw on their many resources when faced with stress. Each part of the tree symbolizes an aspect of a person's life. For example, someone's skills, talents and abilities are represented by the tree's trunk, where they live is represented by the ground, their hopes and dreams are the branches, and the seeds are what they give back to your community. Drawing one's "Tree of Life" is an engaging, interactive activity to provide psycho-social support.

## Tutoring Program

In early 2008, Board of Directors member Al Jacobson decided it was time to take action to help our students pass their 7th and 9th grade exams. Al had been frustrated that the students that CWB supports were being blocked from continuing their education beyond the primary grades because they were not scoring high enough on the National exams. He decided to initiate a tutoring program for the seventh and ninth graders to help them prepare for these standardized tests. The initial pilot program yielded promising results.

The Board realized that it was important to recognize the students who had passed their exams. A celebration would be held in each

community in honor of these students and their caregivers. A member of the Board would present to each student who had passed the exam a certificate of recognition and a book entitled, "Zambia's Youth and HIV/AIDS." Chris Kyle, a graphic designer, who is a member of the CWB Council, created special certificates that were personalized for each student and signed by Dr. Bail.

The celebrations not only recognized those who passed the exams, but also served as an example to younger students of what they too could achieve some day. In reflecting upon the experience of giving these awards, Dr. Bail wrote,



*Richard N. Bail, MD, MPH, Founder and President of CWB, congratulates student on passing exams.*



*Students at the Bauleni Family Support Home with their certificates and gift from CWB.*



*A future High School student. The award ceremonies inspire young students.*



*Students from Chawama Family Support Home in their high school uniforms displaying their certificates.*

One of the most satisfying experiences I have ever had has been to participate in the award ceremonies we have held for the children passing the exams... The look on these children's faces is priceless! For most, this is the first time they have ever received such validation. You can see in their eyes that they are determined to go forward. Young girls declare they want to become journalists, or accountants or lawyers. This is how Zambia will recover from the impact of AIDS-through the education of its children.

In 2009 the Tutoring program was expanded to more communities and the pass rates continued to be strong—better than the national average! In 2010 students from every community that CWB supports continued to participate in the tutoring program, and results continued to outpace the National average!

**Miriam Moonga, from Garden Compound, recently passed her 7th grade exams and sent this note to express her gratitude to CWB.**

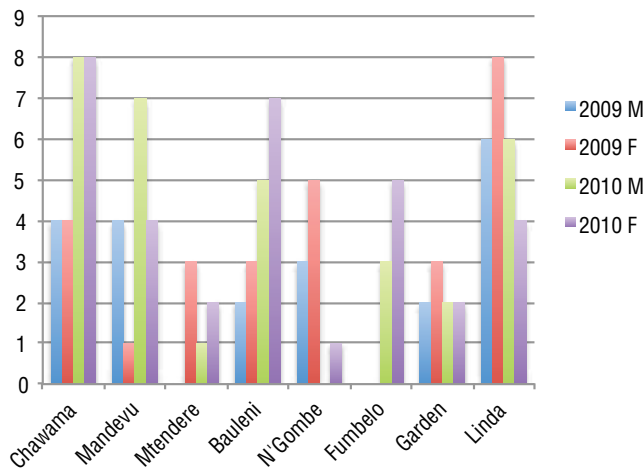


My name is Miriam Moonga; I was born on 28th January 1996 at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka. I am the third born in a family of five and I have only one brother. My father died on 25th June 2006 when I was in Grade 5 and my mother has been taking care of us since my father died. I started my pre-school in 2000 at Rise and Shine and I started my Grade 1 at Old Northmead Basic School in January 2002 where I am up to today. From Grade 1 I have been passing number one except one term in Grade 3 when I passed number 2. During the Grade 7 examination I had the highest marks (802) at our School and the School gave me 4 exercise books and a mug cup as prize for doing so well. My hopes are to become a Lawyer when I finish School so that I can help administer justice in our country.

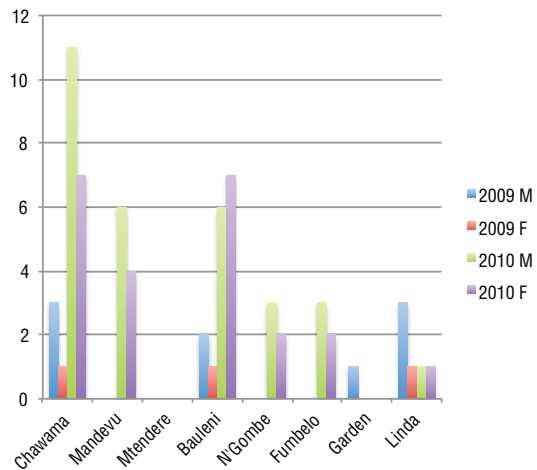
I would like to my sincere thanks and appreciation to Community Without Borders (CWB) for supporting as without this help I would have stopped School a long time ago as my mother would not have afforded to take me and my sisters and brother to School. May God richly continue to bless you so that you can help those of us who cannot afford to pay for Schools.

**Impressive Increase in Number of CWB-Supported Students Passing Exams in 2010**

**7th Grade Students**



**9th Grade Students**



All grade seven (7) and grade nine (9) students in 10 schools and in 8 communities participated in the tutoring program in 2010. This program started in mid-May and continued to November when the students sit for their exams. The children attend this program every week day, either in the morning or the afternoon, depending on their school schedule and the attendance is good. This program has been very successful. In fact, in 2009, the students in 2 communities-Fumbelo and Chipego achieved a 100% pass rate! In 2010, the 7<sup>th</sup> graders achieved a pass rate of 81% and the 10<sup>th</sup> graders achieved a pass rate of 96%. (This

is based on data provided by SWAAZ which administers the program in 6 of the communities.) These pass rates compare very favorably with the National pass rates of 84% and 96% for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades respectively.

In the future, and with additional revenue to support the program, CWB hopes to begin the tutoring program earlier in the year to improve the pass rates, especially in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Eventually we hope to be able to extend the tutoring program to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to ensure that they can get their graduation certificate, and hopefully go to college.

# Financial Overview of 2010

<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Checking account, Citizens Bank, MA	\$32,952	\$25,278
PayPal	545	2,445
Vanguard Short Term Investment-Grade bond Fund	55,754	65,756
Checking account, Standard Bank, Lusaka, Zambia	13,682	22,352
Petty Cash, Lusaka, Zambia & other	302	-557
Undeposited Funds	21,434	0
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$124,369</b>	<b>\$115,274</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accrued Expenses	3,025	860
Trip Deposits	4,800	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$7,825</b>	<b>\$860</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted Funds	58,036	52,966
Temporarily Restricted Funds		
Targeted to OVC education and partner community support	56,207	50,356
Other Segregated Funds	2,300	13,529
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$116,544</b>	<b>\$116,851</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$124,369</b>	<b>\$117,712</b>

Gifts from our US partners and individuals continued to grow rapidly at 23% over 2009. However total expenditures grew faster than income at 31%. Administrative and program support overhead expenses increased by \$3,690 or 25%, about in line with the total increase in income. But grants to beneficiary communities increased far faster than donation income. In total, income and expenditure were evenly matched — both near \$160 thousand for the year. Net income was therefore breakeven. CWB will most likely continue to face a high growth rate in expenditures as our students advance to higher grades with a concomitant increase in education costs.

Net income at breakeven means that the fund balance, in total, was unchanged. However, unrestricted funds dropped by about \$5 thousand

or 10%. This trend is expected to continue and intensify as growth will require more administrative infrastructure to support a larger organization. Such overhead must be paid for from unrestricted donations. While our matching communities fundraising model restricts funds raised from each U.S. donor community for use by its overseas partner community, we have not yet developed a direct fundraising program as a source of renewable unrestricted funds.

CWB's balance sheet at December 31 shows a seasonally large fund balance as most donations are received at or near the end of the calendar year. The largest tuition expenses for the orphans and vulnerable children whose education CWB supports are due in January and September.



Sharon Sisskind, Communities Without Borders' Executive Director.

## CWB Council

The CWB Council is made up of representatives of each of the U.S. partners. Four times a year, the CWB Council meets to hear about the latest news from Zambia as well as news from their counterparts. The location of the meeting rotates, with each partner having the opportunity to host the gathering at its organization.

When Sharon Sisskind, Communities Without Borders' Executive Director, joined CWB in 2007 she noticed that the structure of the organization was not conducive to sharing ideas between U.S. partners. Each of the partners in the United States, most of whom were located in the greater Boston area, were matched with a Family Support Home in the compounds around Lusaka, Zambia. Each summer groups from the U.S. would travel to Zambia to work with their partners, teaching in the classrooms, training teachers, playing with the children, painting schools, building latrines, and doing whatever they could to support the efforts to provide an education to the orphans and vulnerable children CWB supports. The U.S./Zambian ties grew and deepened but each partnership operated somewhat independently of the others. Sharon commented,

*While I loved the business model that existed, I couldn't help but notice that the model did not foster the exchange of ideas—wonderful and very creative ideas—that the U.S. partners were developing. There was no organization of the U.S. partners. In fact,*

*although they were located in close proximity to each other, many had never met. It seemed critical that the Board create a mechanism for the U.S. partners to get together on a regular basis to share their ideas and concerns.*

When I was appointed Executive Director, creating the CWB Council was a very high priority for me. I was learning about the wonderful things that our partners were doing and realized that all of the partners could benefit from hearing about them. Our first Council meeting was a huge success. The exchange of ideas was inspiring and energizing.

Over the past few years several

projects have been initiated by one member of the Council and shared with other partners.

The concept of an *Alternative Gift Fair* was brought to the Council by members from the Wellesley Congregational Church.

- Eliot Church in Newton Corner adapted this idea to raise money to enhance the building where their Zambian partners met and fed the children. They suggested that rather than buying Mothers' Day gifts, people donate sacks of cement and nails to honor their mothers.
- The First Unitarian Church in Newton held its first Alternative Holiday Gift Fair which raised money not only for Communities Without Borders, but also 12 other worthy non-profit organizations that are supported by that society.

Special services have been developed for travelers to share their deeply personal experiences about their work in Zambia. Over the years, these services have become more inspiring and engaging as partners collaborate on everything from slide shows, speakers and ideas for matching contributions.

The Council helped with the planning for the celebrations to honor the students who passed their 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade exams. Chris Kyle, from the First Unitarian Parish in Lexington, MA created individual certificates to award each child.

*Knitted Dolls* are made by many of our partners. The original pattern for the dolls was brought to the Council by an avid knitter from the Wellesley Congregational Church, and the idea quickly caught on. Each year these dolls

delight the children who receive them. Most have never had a doll before.



Young orphan hugs her new doll.



## Board of Directors

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Brita Gill-Austern, MDiv, PhD  
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Alvin Jacobson, MBA, PhD  
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Peter Smith  
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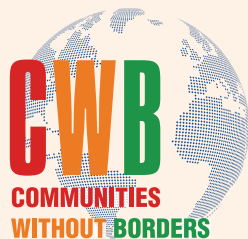
Sharon Sisskind, MBA  
*Executive Director*

Jane N'dulo  
*Special Envoy in Zambia*



Children at the Chawama Compound in Lusaka, Zambia.

Photography: Square photographs on page 1, group photograph on page 2, and all photographs on page 8 were taken by Arthur Moss-Hawkins, a Newton North High School student.



## Contact us

- Could a community in which you live or work be linked to a community in Africa?
- Please send us an email and we will help to make it happen!
- We will come to meet with your group.
- We invite your creative thinking on how to make this project even better!

**Call:** 617 965-4713

**E-mail:** [info@communitieswithoutborders.org](mailto:info@communitieswithoutborders.org)

**Web site:**

[www.communitieswithoutborders.org](http://www.communitieswithoutborders.org)

**Donate online.**

### Mail donations to:

Communities Without Borders  
63 Pickwick Road  
West Newton, MA 02465

Your contribution is fully tax-deductible IRS #20-0842080. CWB is a non-governmental organization established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

For more information on how to get involved, please contact us at [info@communitieswithoutborders.org](mailto:info@communitieswithoutborders.org) or call 617 965-4713.



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