

# Sekelela Magazine 2018

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**Sekelela Magazine aims to reach out to all well-wishers and inform them about the activities and challenges of the school.**



Kaumbi Always teaches grades 6 and 7 along with math and business studies in grades 8 and 9.



Rachael Miyanda teaches grades 3 and 4.



Mary Mwelwa teaches grades 1 and 2.



Evelyn Zulu, the head teacher, teaches pre-class and grade 5. She is pursuing an early childhood diploma and does guidance and counseling.

## Mission Statement

Sekelela Community School is a non-profit organization committed to complement the Ministry of General Education in providing education and life skills to orphaned and vulnerable children with the focus on the girl child and learners with special education needs.

We are also committed to providing adult literacy and life skills to the general populace in the community.

## School open since 1998

Sekelela Community School was established in 1998 and has been in existence for the past 20 years.

It started under a tree with a population of 25 (18 girls and 7 boys).

Sekelela Community School was initiated by the community to offer quality education to the “left out” in the community who are not in government schools due to their parents’ and guardians’ vulnerability status.

The school caters to orphans and the most needy in the community.

The school is governed by a board elected by the community. The board is called Parents Community School Committee (PCSC).

Current enrollment: boys 181, girls 187. Total is 368.

The school is located in Lusaka West.



# Chairperson describes aims

At a Parents Community School Committee meeting for Sekelela in July, 2016, it didn't take me long to decide that perhaps I could make myself useful by contributing something to the community by helping out with the school.

So I stood for the position of chairperson and got elected.

My professional background is in sales and marketing.

Currently, I am a small scale farmer growing vegetables and chicken broilers and branching out into beekeeping.

Previously, I worked in the corporate world and was for a while an area sales

manager for a beverage company.

The experience and exposure I gained there, I felt, could come in handy in my community.

While I have been chairperson for Sekelela, I was also elected chairperson of chairpersons for all community schools under Zambia Open Community Schools, representing them on the ZOCS board.

As chairperson for Sekelela, I would like to see a school that is a success in all areas: teacher remuneration, improved child education and school infrastructure development.

—Patrick Zulu



**Patrick Zulu chairs Sekelela's Parent Community School Committee.**



**During a math class 8th-graders pay close attention.**

## Among Sekelela's challenges:

1. Electricity power installation—all four classrooms installed with trunking, wiring, circuit breakers, switches, sockets, etc., for three-phase power. The installation is under way.
  2. Salaries for teachers
  3. Five more classrooms
  4. Lack of a library
  5. Construction of block for library computer and science labs
  6. Computers
  7. K5000.00 outstanding balance to pay the owner of the plot and obtain complete ownership/title deeds
  8. Water reticulation improvement—install piped water, water tank and water pump
  9. Books—grade 7 new curriculum
  10. Enough food for the feeding program
  11. Proper kitchen for cooking food for the feeding program
  12. Water—Our bore hole dries up mostly after the rainy season. For this reason our school has failed to have a garden.
- See Achievements and Sekelela sponsors pages 7 and 8.**

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*'It always seems impossible, until it is done.'* —Nelson Mandela

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Mary Mwelwa works with children in grades 1 and 2.

# Teachers tell why Sekelela matters

## Working at Sekelela

by Mary Mwelwa

Why work at Sekelela? Several reasons.

I want to help children who can't afford to go to private schools, where there are a lot of requirements, such as school shoes and proper uniforms.

Sekelela has single and double orphans, and I want to help them.

Parents of the children can not support them in the government schools and private schools.

It is important to show faith to the community.

I can learn from the children themselves and from staff members.

I want to deliver very good work as a teacher.

## Hope for orphans, one at a time

by Kaumbi Always

She was 11 years old and in my 6th-grade class in 2016.

During lessons, she would sit quietly without talking to anyone.

At break time, she would sit alone. At times in class, I would see that she was crying.

"Tell me what is really troubling you," I said to her one time. "I want you to be free and open so that I can see how you

can be helped."

"Sir," she answered. "I have a lot of things in my head.

"Two years ago, I lost my parents. I could not go to school because there was nowhere to go and no one to pay the school fees.

"This year, 2018, my grandmother came to take care of us so that my two sisters and I might continue learning at this school.

"I am sorry to tell you that I have nothing to pay for school, and my grandmother is old. She can't do much work to meet our daily needs.

"Sometimes I feel like I should give up on school and do other things."

I told her that these things do happen, but they are not the end of the world.

"Sekelela will offer you and your two sisters all you need in education," I said. "Bring them here so they can be in class.

"From now on, you need to be free and express yourself to me or your other teachers."

She became free. Now she is in the 8th grade.

## Girl children may have special needs

by Evelyn Zulu

Most of the girls are being married off

when they drop out of school because of lack of support.

Even though they pass on to grade 8 or 10, lack of support means they lose interest in being in school, and hence they choose to get married.

The school team needs to make sure that we sensitize the parents to the importance of their children being educated and the dangers of marrying off their children when they are young.

We also need to give counsel and love to the children so they stay in school. We need to make sure that they get the support and quality education they need.

Children with disabilities need to feel love. We need to involve them in activities and allow them to be in school.

These children also need to learn along with children who are not disabled in order to feel that they can make it in life.

## How the school helps support children living with HIV/AIDS

by Evelyn Zulu

When we as a school find out that a child is HIV positive, we need to show the child love and care.

We also need to

- link the family to organizations that



assist people living with HIV.

- ensure that the family of the child takes the child for routine medical examinations for people living with HIV

- emphasize adherence to prescribed medicine.

As a teacher when teaching about HIV/AIDS, it's important to

- be sensitive with words, so as not to negatively affect an infected child

- give hope to the child that he/she can make it in life

- continue guiding the child, making sure that the child is always in school

- provide the child with social, spiritual and emotional support.

The challenge we face as teachers is that most of the learners and parents don't open up to tell us about their status.

I just came across two pupils who told me that they are HIV positive, and that's when I gave them the counseling they needed.

Here in Africa it's not easy to talk about HIV/AIDS if you are not trained as a counselor. I was trained and did psycho-social counseling so that it would be easier for me to talk to the parents and the children.

As to disclosure, it is important first to find out what the child knows about HIV/AIDS.

In counseling the child it is important to

- show love and care

- emphasize the importance of taking the prescribed drugs regularly

- be supportive when the child is taking the drugs.

In terms of protecting a child living with HIV/AIDS, counselors need to

- find a strategy or approach to deliver the message without emotional pain

- involve the child's care givers in the matter

- involve the child in the counseling process.

## My best experiences

by **Rachael Miyanda**

Teaching orphaned children and making sure they get an education and can prosper have been the greatest experiences in my life. I shall forever embrace them.

With a focus on a girl child, it is important to show her how to live a good life and not to be found in dangerous places like

bars.

A girl child needs to avoid STDs and unwanted pregnancies. It is important to emphasize the value of education.

Concerning boys, I have also worked with those who used to indulge themselves in different bad experiences and risky pastimes like drinking beer, smoking, womanizing and dropping out of school.

For example, I sat down with a boy who wanted to give up on school because of his age. He was 14. He thought he had grown enough and that he was too big for school. He thought beer drinking and womanizing were the only ways to get rid of his shame.

But I sat him down, talked to him and counseled him until he decided to come back to school.

Now he's in his last grade of high school here: 10th grade. He's a good boy now.

A 13-year-old girl was in grade 3 when she started to feel the pressure.

She wanted to have clothes like the others had and to fit in.

I noticed the pressure and her anxiety. She started coming to class late and missing classes.

One day I sat her down. She was very open, and I listened and did not condemn her.

Instead, I encouraged her to focus on school. She changed. Now she's in 5th grade.

## Teaching about healthy habits

by **Rachael Miyanda**

Along with teaching grades 3 and 4, I am in the school's health department.

As the facilitator of the group, I ensure school safety and that there are tissues and soap available.

I also conduct youth corners where I usually spend a day each week with students aged 13-18. We discuss matters that affect them in their daily lives growing up.

Issues include STDs, HIV/AIDS, early marriages, the importance of abstinence, and most of all the goodness and benefits of keeping God close to them.

They need to create a solid relationship with God.

About sexually transmitted infections, I talk about how they are transmitted and how to avoid them.

As to early marriages, this topic mostly affects girl children since they are victims. But in other instances boys can be affected too.

I usually discuss with them how marriage is good, but only after they finish high school, college and find a job. We talk about how early marriages can block one's prosperity in most cases.

I tell them first to focus on today's work and to always aim high in life: "Good work yields success."

Discussing these matters with the kids means a lot to me and to them. I hope I am helping them to build their futures safely.



**Netball is one of the sports activities for both boys and girls. Others include football (soccer), shotput, volleyball and discus.**





# Library corners help open minds

by Kaumbi Always

To improve children's performance and reading skills and open their minds to the outside world, the school introduced library corners in the four classrooms.

The books come from Communities Without Borders and Zambia Open Community Schools.

Talking about how library corners have been helpful, Albert, a 9th-grader, said, "From the time that library corners came to our class, I have been asking for books to read almost every weekend."

"The book I loved most is *Readers Companion* because of the stories. My favorite is 'The Bracelet' by Colette."

"It is interesting to read books when we go home and then tell the stories to the class."

Aaron, a 7th-grader, said he had had difficulty in writing, but that now, using the books in the library corner has improved his vocabulary.

"I like *A Tale Dark and Grimm* most," he said.

"If we can have more activities during library periods like narrating stories, we will be able to come up with our own stories that can be gathered together."

He said he hoped that soon there will be permanent wooden book shelves in each classroom to replace the sacks.

## School needs more books

by Mary Mwelwa

Sekelele has a number of special needs.

The first is enough books so that each child has a book. Now five children use one book.

Another need is class time so they have enough class time to learn. When we get more classrooms and teachers, students will not have to be in combined grade levels and three shifts each day..

The children with disabilities need specially trained teachers.

Pupils need computers.

They also need a library building.



Two 9th-grade students choose books to read during the library period in class. They chose *The World Book Encyclopedia* and *Prentice Hall Literature*.





Sekelela Community School has two buildings, each with two classrooms and a teachers' room.

## School achievements include new facilities

- Our school has 2x2 classrooms, which were built with help from **Zambian Open Community Schools** and the council under **Constituency Development Funds**.

- We have 2x2 VIP toilets, which were built with help from the **Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia** and **CIDRZ** under **UNICEF**.

- We also have two hand washing facilities built by **CIDRZ**.

- Our school was part of the team that represented our district in a teaching competition using local materials. Our district was second after **Kafue District**.

- Our sports teacher was elected as the

member of sector committee that looks at zonal level athletics and ball games.

- Our school team performed all the other community school activities and was among best teams. Two of our pupils represented our district at province level.

- **We've had a 97% average 7th grade exam pass rate for the past five years.**

- We have a solar panel, which is our only source of power until the new electrical connection is in place.

- We have a new 50-meter deep bore hole (well) and hand pump.

- Our textbooks and different types of reading books were donated by **ZOCS**,

**CWBZ** and the **District Education Board Secretary, Chilanga**.

- We have repaired our desks and now have at least enough for our learners.

- We have a field to grow maize, beans and ground nuts for the feeding program

- Due to youth health friendly corner, **Anti-AIDS** and other related clubs at our school, the club coordinator was chosen to represent the district as an ambassador for early pregnancies and teenage pregnancies, due to the fact that our school recorded 0% pregnancies during 2014 and 2015.

- Fifteen pupils successfully sat for grade 7 examinations.

- Our school has literacy programs for learners and adults.

- Two out of four teachers are undergoing training in teaching primary and early childhood diploma with the help from **ZOCS** and **CWBZ**.

- We have a feeding program for our students and teachers.



Our new toilets were provided with help from **CIDRZ** and **UNICEF**.

## Lessons learned

- Lack of food for the feeding program has lowered the attendance of our learners and their concentration.

- Lack of allowances has made teachers leave the school for greener pastures and other teachers start to concentrate on personal business. This problem has affected the performance of the administration and some learners.





Communities Without Borders provided eye testing and glasses.



Our previous bore hole (well) was only 30 meters deep and often dried up. Our new bore hole and hand pump are drilled down 50 meters, which means we will get water even during the dry season. We plan to connect a water pump to the new phase 3 electrical connection so we can water our garden and harvest fresh vegetables for our feeding program.



Children help unpack books from Communities Without Borders.

## Sekelela sponsors

**Johnson Family** – Provided the land on which the school is built.

**MTN Corporation** – Provided funding for the first two-classroom building in 2010 and the new toilet buildings, and painted both the classroom buildings.

**Bernard Biven** – Provided funding for the first two-classroom building.

**Constituency Development Fund** – Provided funds for the second two-classroom building.

**UNICEF** – Provided materials for new toilets.

**Oxfam International & CIDRZ** – Assisted with the construction of the new toilets and hand washing station.

**Lafarge Corporation** – Provided funding for education programs for girl child protection, preventing early marriages and AIDS prevention.

**Zambia Open Community Schools ZOCS** – Provided textbooks, teacher training workshops and coordinated sponsor connections to Sekelela Community School.

**Youth with a Mission (YWAM)** – Provided the new 50-meter-deep bore hole (well) with hand pump.

**Communities Without Borders CWB** – Provided textbooks, funded the head teacher's three-year training for a diploma at Mwarona College of Education, provided eye testing and glasses for all students in 2016 and provided Days for Girls training and menstrual kits so that no girl would have to miss classes. CWB volunteers repaired desks. All teachers attended CWB training workshops in 2016 and 2017. CWB is fitting both classroom blocks for electricity in 2018. CWB also developed this magazine.