Notes and impressions

A deceptive calm belies the massive stress in Zimbabwe. People have terrible financial difficulties. Unemployment is now estimated at 90%. The cost of living has rocketed. Toothpaste costs US$7; a small notebook costs US$3.

"In our country, police are not really the people's friends. They are not seen as the protectors of the people. They are seen as the enforcers of the law."

"We are facing a crisis in Zimbabwe. People are living in poverty. There are no jobs. People are hungry."

"The situation in Zimbabwe is complex. There are few resources available to support the return of the diaspora."

"We are an entry point to the diaspora and an information channel to and from the diaspora."

"Our visit was made possible through the support of the Scurrah Wainwright Charity, whose mission is to acknowledge that the world欠 our debt to the people of Zimbabwe. We also owe our thanks to the Pambini Trust and Book Café in Harare, and the Zimbabwe Association for their support."

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="The police and artist Owen and Richard are still doing stuff. Things are tough in Harare."
The ZA delegation met with five organisations as a basis for ongoing collaboration.

Key contacts: David Karingamupembe, Fund-raising Officer; Mathias Paradza, Chief Finance Officer

DAPP is one of the longest established development NGOs in Zimbabwe, with long-term projects in education, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, community development and environmental conservation in Mashonaland, Manicaland, Masvingo and Harare. DAPP Zimbabwe is one of 45 community-based NGOs affiliated to the Madrid-based Humana People to People, which provide funding and support and has a strong emphasis on self-reliance and developing its own income streams eg from second-hand clothing sales.

We discussed the possibility of a pilot project for returns to work on DAPP projects.

In principle agreement to explore possibility of a joint project for returns to work on DAPP projects.

Outcome:

Established good relations with Caritas and agreed to keep in touch.

**Outcomes**

**Re-engagement**

Each of us personally reconnected with friends, family and former contacts after over 10 years of absence from Zimbabwe.

**Profile-raising**

A wide range of organisations and individual contacts were introduced to the purposes and aims of the ZA.

**Relationships**

Contacts were established with key organisations as a basis for potential ongoing collaboration.

**Learning**

All of us learned an enormous amount about the complexities, challenges and opportunities of the situation in Zimbabwe and its day-to-day realities.

**Direction**

Our discussions helped to clarify some potential future directions for the ZA work, healing and reconciliation, information and cultural linkages.

**Prospective Partner Organisations**

The ZA delegation met with five organisations where there is potential for developing collaborative partnership arrangements.

**Pamberi Trust**

Harare, umbrella body for the Book Cafe.

**Dance Trust**

Harare.

**Nhimbe Trust**

Bulawayo.

**Key contacts:**

Paul Birckholz, Penny Yon, Tomas Brickhill at Pamberi Trust; Book Cafe; Josh Nyanjalo at Nhimbe Trust; Soukaina (Marie-Laure Edom), Dance Trust

**These three arts and cultural organisations comprise SCAMDI, the Steering Committee of Africalia in Zimbabwe. Africalia is a Belgian funder which believes that art and culture are essential elements in a sustainable human development process.**

The ZA took part in two half-day round-table cultural discussions in Harare (sponsored by Pamberi Trust) and Bulawayo (Nhimbe Trust), on the implications of the cultural ‘brain-drain’ and the opportunities for establishing linkages between artists in Zimbabwe and the diaspora.

**Outcome:**

Proposal to explore the feasibility of a partnership between SCAMDI and the ZA to develop a structured cultural diaspora linkage programme.

**PAMODAC**

Trust for Orphans in Malhovu Community, Harare

Key contact: James Chidakwa

PAMODAC is a community-based initiative to assist AID orphaned children and other children in need to access primary education in one of the poorest high-density parts of Malhovu, Harare. ZA has given an initial donation towards school fees. Our discussion with PAMODAC committee members revolved around the need to develop long-term sustainable funding sources.

**Outcome:**

Agreed from PAMODAC to develop a community-based income-generating project on the principle of ‘Education for Work’.

**Caritas**

Choices Assisted Voluntary Return Programme

Key contact: Charmaine Majoni, Choices Programme Officer

Caritas Zimbabwe, the development arm of the Catholic church, in partnership with Refugee Action in the UK, took over the administration of the Choices Assisted Return Programme (AVRP) from the IOM in October 2011. Since then they have handled the cases of 65-70 returnees. Numbers are slowly increasing.

Charmaine gave us an overview of the assistance available to returnees, the difficulties faced and the limitations of the programme. These include the limited scale of the funding available (does not allow for any significant capital investment), its restrictions (does not cover transport and communications or the import of capital assets), and the bureaucratic and technical obstacles faced by returnees (previous customs duties on personal property).

Charmaine also arranged for us to meet four returnees, whose very varied experiences and perspectives on return, both positive and negative, provided a wealth of useful information for ZA members in considering the AVRP and the possibility of return in general.

**Outcome:**

Established good relations with Caritas and agreed to keep in touch.

**Development Aid from People to People (DAPP)**

Key contacts: David Karingamupembe, Fund-raising Officer; Mathias Paradza, Chief Finance Officer

DAPP is one of the largest established development NGOs in Zimbabwe, with long-term projects in education, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, community development and environmental conservation in Mashonaland, Manicaland, Mavungo and Harare. DAPP Zimbabwe is one of 45 community-based NGOs affiliated to the Madrid-based Humana People to People, which provide funding and support and has a strong emphasis on self-reliance and developing its own income streams eg from second-hand clothing sales.

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In principle agreement to explore possibility of a joint project for returns to work on DAPP projects.

**Outcome:**

**Tree of Life**

Tree of life is a community-based initiative in conflict resolution and reconciliation using ‘healing circles’ to heal and empower victims of torture. It brings victims and perpetrators together in intensive workshops to share personal stories and experience, using the metaphor of the tree as a living organism which can survive drought and the loss of branches and still grow and flourish.

Tree of Life works mainly in the east and central provinces of Zimbabwe. We attended the weekly meeting of Tree of Life’s trained community facilitators (the ‘small circle’), and the monthly meeting of volunteer extension workers from the healing circles established in the various provinces (the ‘big circle’). We also met with father Brian MacGarry, and community worker Edward Tsango, himself a torture survivor, who use Tree of Life methods to heal victims of the Chippanganu gang in Mabure.

**Outcome:**

We were all impressed by Tree of Life’s work and could appreciate its potential for healing amongst ZA members who continue to suffer the after-effects of torture and trauma.

**Caritas Training Institute**

Students at DAPP’s Frontline Training Institute in Shamva.

**Outcome:**

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