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The Mumuni Library opening celebrations



Lubuto Library Partners

Bringing knowledge and enlightenment to Africa's street kids, orphans and other vulnerable children and youth



Newsletter #50 - November/December 2014

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Lubuto enters rural Zambia!

What a different world Lubuto libraries are now reaching in the Southern Province community of Nabukuyu, 23 km east of Monze! Eight years of working with the Matantala Rural Integrated Development Enterprise (MRIDE) and the three Chieftaincies they represent have finally come to fruition in our third and most beautiful library yet, this one comprised of four structures, adding a "community center" as a dedicated space for teenagers and young adults. From the beginning, the community named the library "Mumuni," which is the Chitonga word that means the same as "lubuto" – light, enlightenment and knowledge. At first, some

Nabukuyu community members did not think Lubuto would succeed in creating the library, but they are clearly now extremely happy that they finally have their new community library!

Staff attending the opening events from our Lusaka libraries said that each library just gets better and better, and, indeed, with each Lubuto library we incorporate what we have learned from the previous ones into the design and services. But each library serves a different community as well, and in this first rural Lubuto Library we see very different patterns of use and needs. For example, we see a far greater number of very young mothers visiting the library with their young children, not only taking advantage of the early childhood learning opportunities but a chance for the mothers to learn as well. Though there is a government school nearby, the Mumuni Library is not associated with it, and the community is learning how important a role a public library can play in their lives.



The Mumuni Library opening celebrations were a great success and included many honored guests. Unfortunately Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, the first Republican President of Zambia, was not able to attend the rescheduled opening which was postponed until after the mourning period for late President Sata. In spite of this we were thrilled that so many others made the trek down to the Southern Province for the opening of this library that was made possible by the very generous

financial support of Comic Relief. The celebrations took place over two days with 1000 children and community members on the first day and 2000 people participating on November 21st for the official opening. The theme for the celebration was "Opening doors of opportunity for enlightenment and knowledge to Africa's most vulnerable children and youth."



After the singing of the Zambian National Anthem by the children and community members of Nabukuyu, MRIDE Chairperson Mark Chona, who has been our champion on the establishment of the Mumuni Library, began the celebration with eloquent opening remarks. [Jane Kinney Meyers](#) welcomed the many guests and friends of Lubuto who made the library a reality, particularly acknowledging Comic Relief as bringing "the rain that allowed the seeds to grow." Benson Njobvu, Head of the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of Zambia, read a letter of congratulations from [Dr. Peter Lor](#), Extraordinary Professor of Information Science from the University of Pretoria. Dr. Lor wrote of the importance of books and reading in opening up worlds of opportunity for children. Iris Young, USAID/Zambia's Education Team Leader, read a letter from our strong supporter [Christie Vilsack](#), USAID's Senior Advisor for International Education.

The British Council's Country Director in Zambia, [Wayne Harper](#), represented the U.K. and the British High Commissioner in his remarks that particularly acknowledged Comic Relief's generosity in underwriting the cost of creating and promoting Lubuto's first rural library. "In Zambia," he stated, "Comic Relief is supporting Lubuto Library Partners in improving access to quality education in Zambia through the Lubuto Library Model, with a grant of £592,000 ... over a three year period. The British people, through Comic Relief, are very happy to be involved in the partnership that has led to the creation of the Mumuni Library..."

The official remarks of the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational

Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) were given by Deputy Minister, Hon. Patrick Ngoma. His speech acknowledged the important contributions Lubuto Library Partners are making to Zambian society by introducing high-quality libraries serving young people throughout the country, in partnership with MESVTEE. He looks to a future where Zambia is transformed by such centers of communication and learning.

The opening activities included storytelling, story dramatizations, traditional dance performances, and poetry readings and drumming by the men, women and children of Nabukuyu, all in Chitonga. The Master of Ceremonies, author and former Livingstone DEBS Maxwell Bbalo, provided translations to/from Chitonga and English throughout. Finally, with an eye to the future and the next Lubuto Library, to be hosted by the Mthunzi Centre in Lusaka West, the Mthunzi boys and staff traveled to Nabukuyu and performed at the Mumuni celebration. While the Mumuni opening reflected a deep involvement with Tonga culture it also acknowledges that in Zambia's Jubilee year stakeholders are committed to the spread of enlightenment, and connecting the past with the future, that Lubuto Libraries will bring to all corners of the country.

Supporters who made the Mumuni Library and its opening celebration possible included MESVTEE and MRIDE, Comic Relief and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Protea Hotels Zambia, Lafarge, World Vision, the Nabukuyu Community and Mumuni Library Committee members, the Mukanzubo Cultural Research Institute at Chikuni Mission, the Choma Museum, and scores of individuals who contributed time and resources. The full list of supporters, the programme and other background can be found in the programme booklet.

Programme Booklet

<http://lubuto.org/mumuni.opening.booklet.pdf>

View Slideshow

www.flickr.com/photos/lubutolibraryproject/sets/72157647257343934/show/

Please join us as a sustaining supporter

As a Sustaining Supporter, you will receive an email with each donation to keep you informed of Lubuto's latest developments, of which you are a key supporter. And as you know, this support gives thousands of children, who may otherwise never see the pages of a book, the opportunity to learn, communicate and grow in beautiful, safe and welcoming libraries, making a real and lasting difference in their lives. A modest donation charged to your credit card each month or quarter helps Lubuto tremendously.

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Volunteer of the Month

Our November Volunteer of the Month was Brian DeMarchi! Brian has been a member of our Board of Directors since 2012.

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