



# Lubuto Library Project

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



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## ***In this issue:***

- ✧ Lubuto Library opens
- ✧ Opening celebration
- ✧ Only the beginning
- ✧ President Kaunda's address at the opening celebration
- ✧ Jane Kinney Meyers' opening remarks
- ✧ You can help Lubuto

## ***We need your help!***

Please send check donations to:  
5505 Connecticut Ave., NW, #368  
Washington, DC 20015-2601  
or donate online at:

**[www.Lubuto.org](http://www.Lubuto.org)**

**Combined Federal Campaign  
#12370**



## ***ONLY THE BEGINNING***

The Fountain of Hope's Lubuto Library is the first of at least 100 that are planned for Zambia and regionally. These libraries fill an important gap in services to orphans and vulnerable children, offering a ground-breaking way of especially reaching those who are out of school with opportunities for self-education and learning. It is critical that the libraries be beautiful, welcoming and respectful of local tradition because the children they serve have, in many ways, been cut off from their culture.

## ***LUBUTO LIBRARY OPENS***

The opening of the first Lubuto Library was greeted with glee by the children at the Fountain of Hope street kids shelter in Lusaka, Zambia. Since the doors opened to them, children have been coming in droves and the smiles on their faces pretty much tell the whole story. Reading and listening to stories in groups and alone, sitting in the warm and welcoming space provided by their library, it is a pleasure to see them sharing pictures, practicing their reading skills, and delighting in the knowledge that this place is especially for them.



The library's 4,000 book collection ranges from picture books and early readers to fiction, science and reference books. Fountain of Hope staff are being trained to help the children learn about the collection and how to use the library. The initial collection is being supplemented by books in Zambian languages, and new books, based on traditional Zambian stories, will be created a new Zambia Board on Books for Young People that is being established jointly by the Lubuto Project and the Zambia Library Association.

## ***OPENING CELEBRATION***

The opening celebration for the first Lubuto Library was held on September 21, 2007 at the Fountain of Hope in Lusaka. Invited guests included His Excellency the First President of the Republic of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda, members of the diplomatic corps, government officials and friends of the Lubuto Library Project. The guests and the more than 200 street kids in attendance enjoyed a reading of the book *Caps for Sale* by



President Kaunda, which was simultaneously performed by the street kids Barefeet Theatre. Following the ceremony, which also included a performance by storyteller Leonard Mpundu and speeches by President Kaunda and Lubuto Library Project President Jane Meyers, and letters of congratulations from U.S. First Lady Laura Bush and the UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa Elizabeth Mataka, the street kids were treated to a buffet meal, courtesy of the Holiday Inn, Lusaka.

The highlight of the celebration was the library's opening. A number of guests were more than pleasantly surprised to see what a library for orphans and vulnerable children could be. "This place is magic," said one. Of course, the opinions that count the most were voiced by the children themselves.

### **JANE KINNEY MEYERS' REMARKS AT THE OPENING**

This inauguration is a momentous occasion. The library that we are celebrating today is unique, and it is the first of at least 100 we plan to build. Its architecture, which is based on indigenous styles, was conceived to create a profound, safe and welcoming space for the children it was built to serve, and to re-connect them with society. It is a concrete and enduring recognition that they are important and cared-for members of the Zambian and international communities and a reminder that if we make the effort to help them to thrive it will enrich all of our lives.

This library is beautiful and special, but it is much more than a building filled with stacks of books. For the young people assembled with us today and for many others who will find their way here, it is a refuge from life on the streets, a place where they can just be children, and where books will allow them to dream and envision a better future. It is not an extravagance but, rather, simultaneously, an obligation and a reward.

Lubuto Libraries feature storytelling, poetry and story reading, singing, drama, art, and related activities to enhance the lives of the children and promote self-expression and literacy acquisition. In this library, some children will learn to read, and others will improve their reading skills. Based on past experience, we have reason to expect that it will help more than a few children to reach the standard required for entrance into secondary education and a path to stable and productive careers. At the same time, we assign no less importance to those children who will come only to hear stories read, or to soar beyond the limits of the street through picture books that span the range from the vistas of outer space to the bed of the ocean floor.

### **YOU CAN HELP LUBUTO**

There are lots of ways for you to get involved with the Lubuto Library Project. Help with fundraising, communications, volunteering, or research. Learn more on Lubuto's website: [www.Lubuto.org](http://www.Lubuto.org)

### **PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S ADDRESS AT THE OPENING CEREMONY (abridged)**

I am deeply honoured to be invited to open the Lubuto Library at this historic Fountain of Hope Street Kids Drop-in Center. When I received the invitation, I was struck by a number of things. Principally, the hosting organization - 'Fountain of Hope,' a place of refuge for street kids and orphans, whose parents had died of AIDS. Second, the name of the project - Lubuto Library Project is indeed a source of enlightenment. This great service to the orphans and other vulnerable children will go a long way in answering to the needs of many in our country still living in darkness

overwhelmed by ignorance, disease and exploitation by the greedy and powerful. The project has also potential to meet the needs of the young and the old yearning for light, for knowledge to access to the best that Zambia and the world offer in the 21st Century.

The Lubuto Library Project has great significance to the twelve million people in Zambia. We have tremendous challenges in meeting the Millennium Development Goals to which Government is committed. But the catchment area for children who should be in school is so huge. School places are inadequate. The result is that thousands of children are squeezed out of the school system at a tender age, thrown into the cold and cruel world without hope in their futures. Worse still, many young girls fall prey to idleness and become victims of early pregnancies and early marriages. Even some in school fallout and join the victims of fate. Their future is destroyed.

In a crime-ridden world which offers them no hope, many young children also fall prey to antisocial behaviour such as alcohol and drug abuse and even stealing. Yet many of these kids are brilliant with qualities to excel in their performance in and outside class, and have the potential to make tremendous contribution to the development of their communities and the country. Instead of advancing their leadership potential, enhancing and utilizing their inherent skills to exploit the vast rich natural resources in their communities and nation, they wallow in poverty and degradation.

The Lubuto Library Project provides an opportunity to children, starting in Lusaka and Kitwe, to access knowledge and valuable information for personal development and self-fulfillment. Libraries as vast reservoirs of productive information provide opportunities for education. For as you know, there are books that entertain, books that inform and pass knowledge and books that change people's lives. Libraries are the home of such powerful instruments for development. Think of the Bible, the Koran and many other books on faith in which moral values are deeply rooted and form the basis of a stable and humane society.

