

SWEDISH-ZAMBIAN ASSOCIATION

Annual report to the AGM 2008 for the year 2007

The Youth Rights Information Centre (YRIC) project, concentrating on human rights, at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Kitwe continued during 2007. It has a budget of 135,000 kronor of which 121,000 kronor was a grant from SIDA (via Forum Syd) and 14,000 kronor our own contribution. This project is the biggest undertaking the Association has embarked upon in recent years. In many ways it has been rewarding but at the same time it has put a heavy workload on the board, especially the treasurer Elisabeth Persson who deserves a special thanks. The volunteer contract with Anna Tyllström was extended for another four-month period, financed by a SIDA grant. During that period she continued her important work with the youth centre and was very instrumental in recruiting a successor as youth club co-ordinator. Bruce Mubanga was employed in May 2007, and has proved to be an energetic and creative leader.

A new Youth Club for pupils aged 13-15 years has been established. The members of the previous club act as mentors for the new younger members. The project is now focusing on the youth clubs and their outreach activities in the surrounding community. The chairman made a one week long follow-up visit to Mindolo in November 2007 during which he met members of the new youth club, the new co-ordinator and also had meetings with the new Director, Reuben Daka, and other people from the Mindolo management. Despite changes in the management and therefore loss of some continuity the project is developing in a satisfactory way according to agreed upon plans and budget, although some delays and administrative difficulties have occurred. More details about the project can be found on our web site and in the Newsletter.

Along with Bruce Mubanga the chairman attended a Forum Syd-organized conference on Organisational Development in Pretoria in November. More than 20 organizations from South and North met, listened to lectures and had workshops regarding the organizational theme. The most rewarding part was to learn from other organizations and people, to share their experiences and to establish contact for future communications. Bruce Mubanga has already benefited from these new contacts and is networking with other organizations in Zambia involved in youth work. The conference and the follow-up visit to Mindolo was financed by an extra SIDA grant.

Mikael Rosén has worked as an IT-volunteer during a four-month period, September – December, at the Mindolo campus on a SIDA grant. His main task was to make an inventory of the current situation, analyze development needs, recommend a development plan, train staff and if possible assist in the recruitment of an IT-person. It was a challenging assignment. Of course the four-month period was too short to achieve all these goals but Mikael Rosén did a good job and had some success in convincing the Mindolo management that they need an internal competent person taking care of the computer network. Mikael Rosén identified some qualified candidates and has handed over the matter to the Human Resource manager for further actions. Hopefully there will be an IT-person in place soon.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 24 March 2007 at Etnografiska Museet, Stockholm. The AGM approved the Annual Report, the Financial Report and the Auditors' Report and gave the Board a vote of confidence. The AGM elected the following Board for 2007/2008:

Rolf Svanström	Chairman	1 year left
Anna Tyllström	Vice chairman	Reelection 2 years
Elisabeth Persson	Treasurer	New election 2 years
Lennart Simonsson	Secretary	1 year left
Joyce de Maré	Permanent	Reelection 2 years
Ylva Werlinder	Permanent	New election 1 year
Magnus Halling	Permanent	New election 1 year
Tim Curtis	Alternate	New election 1 year
Karin Johansson	Alternate	New election 1 year
Karl-Johan Sonnegård	Alternate	Reelection 1 year

Göran Häggfeldt was re-elected as auditor, Tommy Hemmingsson was elected (new) as auditor, and Nils-Gunnar Smith was elected (new) as an alternate auditor, all three for 1 year. In the Nominating Committee Margareta Sonnegård (convenor) and Paula Maritz and Tell Åke Dahlöf were re-elected for 1 year.

The board met on January 17, February 19, March 26, May 9, June 13, August 15 (in conjunction with an excellent lunch at the Sonnegård's place), September 10, October 16 and December 19. At the end of the year the number of paying members was 107, a decrease from last year by 25 despite the influx of 9 new members.

Ylva Werlinder is now in charge of producing our web site (www.swedish-zambian.org) and the paper-based Newsletter, which has already resulted in a face-lift of Newsletter. The web site is updated on a regular basis and members who have submitted their email addresses receive information about updates. However, we are still missing email addresses for 30 percent of our members, which is an obstacle in our effort to improve communication and to cut costs. There has been positive feedback from several members and others. The average number of visitors to the web site is 15/day and increasing. The paper-based Newsletter was published once in June.

Our excellent relationship with the Zambian Embassy continues. The board meets in the premises of the embassy. Representatives from the embassy and the sister organization Pamodzi are invited to share information at the meetings. Together we organised a very pleasant Independence Day celebration October 20 at the ambassador's residence.

The Association organized three MFS-seminars in co-operation with INUG (Ingenjörer och Naturvetare Utan Gränser) and the Department for Political Science in Uppsala. We informed briefly about the Association, distributed our leaflet and talked about the possibilities to carry out Minor Field Studies in Zambia and what support the Association could give. The seminars attracted in all about 90 students and several showed some interest in Zambia.

We have felt an urge to build more capacity in the areas where we are active. One such area is Human Rights, which is the main theme of the YRIC project at Mindolo. In October we launched a seminar series. Three facilitators from the Red Cross in Stockholm gave an initial three-hour course. The seminar covered basic human rights and international treaties. The seminars will continue during 2008. Several members of the board have attended Forum Syd courses in various subjects.

The Association has been member of Forum Syd and Nätverk Södra Afrika during 2007.

The Financial Report indicates that Association's finances are in good order and that there will be a small deficit for 2007.

*Uppsala March 2008, for the Board
Rolf Svanström, Chairman*