

SWEDISH-ZAMBIAN ASSOCIATION

Annual report to the AGM 2009 for the year 2008

The Mindolo youth project, concentrating on human rights for youths, continued during 2008. The application for support from SIDA through Forum Syd was granted for a new period 2008 - 2009. It has a budget of 287,000 kronor of which 259,000 kronor is a grant and 28,000 kronor is our own contribution for the two year project period. This project is the biggest undertaking the Swezam association has embarked upon and it puts an extra demand on the people involved in the project, but it is well compensated for by the rewarding feedback from the participating Zambian youth.

The vision of the project is to reach out to Zambian youth, educate and empower them about real life issues, making them good and productive citizens in society by providing them with information as regards to Human Rights, HIV/AIDS and Gender. The means to reach the vision are:

- to establish a Youth's Rights Information Centre for capacity building and organizational development within the targeted area. Today three youth clubs are linked to the centre.
- to build strong networks with the secondary schools from where the club members (school pupils) are recruited. Presently the project is networking with five secondary schools (High schools) and will establish Swezam clubs in the schools. Today two clubs have been formed.
- to involve other youth and adults (parents, teachers) through outreach activities
- to network with other organizations that run or conduct youth programmes such as YAN (Youth against AIDS Network), PPAZ (Planned Parenthood Association Zambia) and SWHAP (Swedish Workplace HIV/AIDS Programme)

In my opinion the project is a success, which was again confirmed during my last follow-up visit in November, and can to a large part be credited to the youth co-ordinator Bruce Mubanga and the youth club members. The organization and focus of the project has evolved over time and the influence from the youth has increased continuously. Today the youth clubs have two representatives in the seven person strong project committee. The direction of the project is changing from youth clubs capacity building to outreach activities in schools and the surrounding community in order to reach more people with the message of human rights. The project is now seen by the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation (MEF) management as an integral part of their activities. Bruce has become a full-time employee of MEF. The project was visited by three of our members in June, a memorable and energizing experience. Other Swedish organizations have recently become aware of the project, resulting in visits to MEF and the project. More details about the project can be found on our web site.

To be able to carry out the project we have to raise funds for Swezam's own contribution, roughly 14,000 kr per year. At the start of 2008 we had 11,050 kr reserved for this purpose. During 2008 we managed to collect 4,274 kr of which 2,950 kr have been used during 2008. We would like to thank several members for their contributions. However we need more donations and fund-raising activities for the years to come, if the project is to continue.

Swezam has received funds from SIDA/Forum Syd for an exchange programme between Swezam and Mindolo. The purpose of the programme is to develop methods for assessing the effects of our project on the community involved. During 2009 three persons from Sweden will visit Mindolo and three persons from Mindolo will visit Sweden to work together on the issue.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 15 March 2008 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 2008/2009:

Rolf Svanström	Chairman	Reelection 2 years
Anna Tyllström	Vice chairman	1 year left
Elisabeth Persson	Treasurer	1 year left
Lennart Simonsson	Secretary	Reelection 2 years
Joyce de Maré	Permanent	1 year left
Ylva Werlinder	Permanent	Reelection 2 years
Magnus Halling	Permanent	Reelection 2 years

Tim Curtis	Alternate	Reelection 1 year
Karin Johansson	Alternate	Reelection 1 year
Owen Mwinga	Alternate	New election 1 year

Göran Häggfeldt and Tommy Hemmingsson were re-elected as auditors, and Nils-Gunnar Smith was re-elected as an alternate auditor, all three for 1 year. The meeting elected Gillis Hedlund (new) as member of the Nominating Committee and encharged the incoming board to help suggest new members.

The board met on January 15, February 19, April 9, May 27, June 13, September 9, October 14, November 9 and December 9. At the end of the year the number of paying members was 122, an increase from last year by 15.

The web site (www.swedish-zambian.org) is updated on a regular basis and members who have submitted their e-mail addresses, approx 90%, receive information about the updates. The board has discussed the possibility to reduce cost by printing and distributing the paper-based Newsletter, which was published twice, autumn and winter, only to members without e-mail. The average number of visitors to the web site is 35/day and still on the increase. There has been positive feedback from several members and others. People, e.g. high school pupils and students planning to travel to Zambia, searching the web for information about Zambia, have contacted us for tips and advice.

Our excellent relationship with the Zambian Embassy continues. The board meets on the premises of the embassy. Representatives from the embassy and the sister organization Pamodzi are invited to share information at the meetings. Unfortunately there was no Independence celebration due to the mourning of the late president Mwanawasa and the following by-election.

The Association supported the Maureen Mwanawasa Community Initiative to help poor, elderly citizens with blankets and other commodities. The contribution amounted to 5.150 kr and a number of collected blankets from our members. The Zambian ambassador Mrs Musenge has conveyed a receipt and a letter expressing thanks to the association and its members for the donations.

The Association has supported an MFS-student with information and practical advice in connection with her work in Zambia. We have also helped other students with advice and mediated contacts with MEF regarding wishes to visit them.

We introduced a series of informal After work meetings once a month in February. The purpose was to offer our members and others interested in Zambia, a possibility to meet and talk about Zambia, development issues and other things. Sometimes it was combined with a presentation of a specific theme like women's situation in Zambia or working with youths. The meetings have attracted up to 15-20 people per meeting.

We have continued to improve our knowledge in the areas where we are active, like Human Rights. Two After work meetings were dedicated to presentations from representatives of the Zambian Embassy and following discussions on the topic women's rights and customary law. Several members of the board have attended Forum Syd courses and SIDA seminars in related subjects.

The Association has been a member of Forum Syd during 2008 and has taken part in the development of Forum Syd's new African strategies. Forum Syd has carried out a study on how well its gender policy has infused projects sponsored by them. The Mindolo project was one of the cases studied.

The Financial Report indicates that Association's finances are in good order and that there will be a substantial surplus for 2008.

*Uppsala March 2009, for the Board
Rolf Svanström, Chairman*