



## LESEDI SCHOOLS & CLINIC

### MARCH 2023



Graeme and I will distribute another trip report in June, following our next visit to Lesedi. In the meantime, we asked a few of the Form 2 learners to share their thoughts on Lesedi. Now that our learners are becoming older (and hopefully wiser), we hope that you will hear more from them in the future, rather than us doing all of the talking!

Before we hear from our first Form 2 child, it is worth revisiting something I wrote in the March 2018 trip report, just after we introduced the sponsorship program:

“To me the most touching moment of my trip came from one of the children in Mrs Mutori’s Grade 4 class. As I passed one of the girls with my camera she touched my arm and gently called my name. I stopped and crouched down, anticipating a request for a photo. Instead, in a soft voice and perfect English she thanked me for the school, the computer classes and the chance of an education. I stumbled through a reply about how it was a team effort but I’m not sure if I made any sense as the unprompted words of thanks had melted my heart. I later realised that the girl is one of our new sponsor children, Amanda Kuwana.”

Amanda is still learning at Lesedi, but has now progressed to Form 2 at Lesedi Secondary. Her younger brother is in our special needs class at Lesedi Primary. Both continue to have the same sponsor. Now 14-years old, Amanda wanted to share the following:

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*Lesedi means light. For me the light came just at the right time. My family has been struggling financially since I was a child. Things got worse for our family when my sister lost her job and the next option for me was seeking employment as domestic help. I didn't want that. I wanted to be educated and to become a nurse. I got a place to learn at Lesedi, which is very close to our homestead. The teachers are very helpful. When my parents were called to the school to be told I had been found a sponsor to cover my education we celebrated. The school fees are being paid for and I also get stationery. My sponsor has not asked for anything except that I do my best and work hard in school. I am grateful to my sponsor, and to Fiona and the team who work hard to make sure we have sponsors. We still have challenges at home but I am glad my education is not one of them anymore. I am determined to succeed!*

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**Amanda Kuwana**  
**Future nurse**

With over 360 children now sponsored across the primary and secondary schools, it is sometimes easy to forget the individual stories behind the numbers. Thank you to Amanda for sharing her personal story. Also, a big thank you to everyone who sponsors a child, or supports Lesedi in some other way. You really are changing lives.



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Lesedi is unusual in that we provide daily meals to all our children, the cost of which is partially covered by our sponsorship fees. Another of our Form 2 learners, 15-year old Nyasha Chikovera, shared his thoughts on the importance of the feeding program at Lesedi:

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*I live in Ntabayengwe village nearby Lesedi. The area is dry, has poor soils and we are unable to grow crops for most of the year. It is the same for most villages around Victoria Falls. That makes it difficult for many families to provide food. We also have wild animals and birds feeding on the little produce we manage to grow. Being at Lesedi School has been a great relief for our family and others; parents are no longer struggling to find some food for their kids. We appreciate the food we receive. In primary school they get porridge for breakfast and also lunch. This means our parents are less stressed about feeding us and can make better plans for supper. In secondary school some do bring food for breakfast from home but not all of us are able to, so we just wait for lunch. I'm grateful all my friends and the rest of the kids get fed at the Lesedi schools, and are healthy. The feeding programme is one of my favourite things about coming to school. I only wish it extended to weekends too!*

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**Nyasha Chikovera**

The impact of your support isn't limited to education and food, but also medical care. Lesedi Clinic is a vital resource for the primary and secondary schools, and also for the wider community. Sister Irene and her team work closely with the Lesedi teachers in monitoring the health and welfare of all our learners. A few weeks ago, they made us aware of a boy in our Grade 7 class, 12-year old Knowledge Phiri, who needed surgery for an inguinal hernia. Knowledge was in constant pain and his grandmother, who is raising Knowledge, heartbreakingly said that when the pain starts at night, she just holds her grandson until it subsides. There is nothing else she can do.

Within days of our Facebook appeal we had amazingly raised \$1,200 – the full cost of the surgery. Thanks to your wonderful generosity, Sr Irene was able to arrange the operation, which has certainly been life-changing, and probably lifesaving. Knowledge is now pain-free and has returned to school. He asked us to share his thank you note:



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**A happy Knowledge Phiri,  
post-surgery**

Returning to the comments from our Form 2 learners, 13-year old Dalia Munemo, wanted to stress the importance of the practical subjects we offer at Lesedi Secondary:

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*Lesedi really helps especially when it comes to teaching students the practical subjects. There are some students who are not talented on the academic side but can perform really well in their practical subjects. At Lesedi Secondary we choose two practical subjects from:*

*Agriculture*

*Metal Technology and Design*

*Wood Technology and Design*

*Food Technology and Design*

*The practical subjects are really helping students, and I hope that we can keep on learning.*

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**Dalia Munemo**

After all of the disruptions through the pandemic, schools in Zimbabwe are finally getting back to what they seem to enjoy most...competing against each other. Term 1 was all about athletics. Benson's granddaughter, Loreen Siyawareva, is another of our Form 2 learners, and she has shared this:





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*The first term of the year is always my favourite because it has many sporting disciplines. We started off the year and term with cross country practice, I don't enjoy it much because I'm not good at it. We had to abandon it due to a pride of lions circulating close to the school. The teachers didn't want to risk it. We quickly moved to athletics. It was exciting to see so many good athletes, and most of my friends won gold medals. Our house won. The following week we went to Victoria Falls town for the zonal competitions. We won so many gold medals, a few silver ones and a bronze. At our school we are all juniors so do not yet have a senior team of athletes. Sadly this means we ended up coming 7th overall. However, three of our athletes, Mildred, Bradley and Prince, qualified for the district competitions to represent the 15 schools in our zone. We are so proud of them. The competition was stiffer at district level, so they weren't able to progress to the provincial level. I am proud of our school.*

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**Loreen Siyawareva**

Schools have just broken up for the holidays, and the learners will return on 8<sup>th</sup> May. As has now become traditional, we held our birthday celebrations on the final day of term. 17-year old Thandeka Ngwenya tells us what the celebrations mean to them:

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*We are really thankful about the birthday celebrations that happen at school each term. It is indeed a great system of celebrating the birthdays of every student at Lesedi. They may not get the chance at home, but at school they know their birthday will be celebrated. Students really enjoy when it comes to such occasions. The smiles that will be glowing on their faces show their excitement.*

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**Thandeka Ngwenya**

I think it just remains to finish with a few photos (mostly of athletics and birthday cakes), kindly provided by one of our secondary teachers, Mr Masusela:





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**A HUGE THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO IS HELPING TO MAKE OUR LESEDI DREAMS COME TRUE!!**