

Mid Year

News letter 2026



Our reach and impact



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FOREWORD



Mutukwa Matenganya
Executive Director
Response Network

Dear Partners and Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Mid-Year 2026 edition of the Response Network Zambia Newsletter.

As we reflect on the first half of the year, we are encouraged by the meaningful progress made alongside the communities we serve and the valued partners who continue to invest in our shared vision. Despite an operating environment characterized by economic pressures, climate-related challenges, and evolving development priorities, our commitment to empowering vulnerable communities has remained steadfast.

This half year has been coupled with the election mood as Zambia goes to the polls to elect leaders, we wish that the best candidates win as this equally is important because both Government and NGOs are partners in development as we serve the same members of the community.

This edition highlights key achievements across our programmes, demonstrating how collaborative partnerships are improving livelihoods, strengthening community resilience, promoting inclusive development, and creating sustainable opportunities for women, children, and vulnerable households. Behind every milestone is a story of determination, local leadership, and the collective efforts of communities, government institutions, donors, and other stakeholders working together to create lasting change.

We are proud of the progress made during the first half of the year, while recognizing that significant work still lies ahead. The results presented in this newsletter would not have been possible without the confidence, generosity, and partnership of our donors and development partners. Your continued support enables communities to develop practical, locally owned solutions that will continue to deliver benefits well into the future.

On behalf of the Board, management, staff, volunteers, and the communities we serve, I extend my sincere gratitude for your trust and partnership. We remain committed to accountability, transparency, learning, and delivering meaningful impact that transforms lives.

We hope this newsletter provides valuable insight into the difference your support is making and inspires our continued collaboration as we work towards resilient, inclusive, and self-reliant communities.

Happy reading.

AKIND 2026 Travelers Visit Strengthens Partnership and Inspires Hope



Response Network Zambia was privileged to host the AKIND 2026 Travelers, whose visit reaffirmed the strong partnership between AKIND, Response Network, and the communities we serve. The visit provided a meaningful opportunity for the delegation to witness firsthand the life-changing impact of the Sponsorship Programme while creating unforgettable memories with the children, their families, and the wider community.

AKIND is the principal funding partner of the Sponsorship Programme. Through its generous support, more than 2,500 girls have been assisted to access primary, secondary, and tertiary education, empowering them to pursue their dreams and build brighter future.

Reflecting on the experience, Emily, the delegation team leader, shared:

“Coming to Zambia and visiting Livingstone to see the impact of our support on the girls is something I have looked forward to for many years. I am humbled, and so are my colleagues, to meet the Kubala girls, hear their inspiring testimonies, and interact with children and families whose lives have been transformed through access to decent school buildings.”

The visit followed a series of community and home visits. On Saturday, 14 March 2026, the delegation dedicated the day to Sponsorship Programme activities with the Kubala girls and their families in Livingstone. The occasion offered visitors a unique opportunity to engage directly with the girls, learn about their daily lives, and experience the rich cultural heritage of the communities.

As part of the day’s activities, the AKIND team visited six households of Kubala girls. During these visits, the girls openly shared their personal stories, aspirations, and everyday experiences,

creating an atmosphere of trust, encouragement, and genuine connection.

The cultural exchange continued as the visitors participated in preparing traditional Zambian meals, visited local markets, and joined families in their daily household routines. These shared experiences provided deeper insight into the resilience, hospitality, and strength of the girls supported through the Sponsorship Programme.

Although the visit was brief, it left a lasting impression on everyone involved. The girls expressed immense joy and pride in welcoming the visitors into their homes and sharing their journeys, while the delegation gained a deeper appreciation of the transformative impact made possible through the partnership.

The day concluded with a lively barbecue celebration filled with music, dance, laughter, and fellowship, symbolizing the growing friendship and enduring partnership between the visiting team and the local community.

Beyond supporting individual learners, AKIND has also made significant contributions to improving rural education infrastructure.

Through the partnership with Response Network Zambia, AKIND has supported the construction of community schools, teachers’ houses, and the provision of classroom desks in the rural districts of Kazungula, Kalomo, and Zimba. These investments have created safer, more conducive learning environments for thousands of children and continue to strengthen access to quality education in underserved communities.

The AKIND 2026 Travellers’ visit was more than a field visit—it was a celebration of partnership, shared purpose, and the remarkable achievements that can be realized when communities and partners work together to create lasting opportunities for children.

Makumba Community Celebrates Improved Access to Clean Water on World Water Day



Makumba Primary School in Kazungula District came alive with celebration on 27 March 2026 as pupils, parents, government officials, and community members gathered to commemorate World Water Day and officially commission an upgraded water facility that is already transforming lives across the community.

The initiative was implemented by Dan Church Aid and Norwegian Church Aid Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia, in partnership with Response Network Zambia, under the Restoring Hope Project. The project has significantly improved access to clean and safe water for both Makumba Primary School and the surrounding community.

The upgraded water point is providing reliable access to safe drinking water for more than 300 learners at Makumba Primary School, creating a healthier and more conducive learning environment. Beyond the school, the facility is benefiting over 800 households, reducing the long distances that families—particularly women and children—previously travelled to collect water.

Community members expressed their appreciation for the project, noting that the improved water supply has reduced the time spent fetching water, strengthened hygiene and sanitation practices, and contributed to better health and well-being for households throughout the area.

Speaking during the commissioning ceremony, Kazungula District Commissioner Elias Siamibila commended the partnership, describing it as an excellent example of how collaboration between government and development partners can deliver sustainable solutions to community challenges. He encouraged residents to continue taking ownership of the facility to ensure it remains functional and benefits future generations.

One of the most remarkable achievements of the project is the community's commitment to sustainability. As a demonstration of their ownership and responsibility, the people of Makumba have taken the initiative to insure the water facility, ensuring that resources will be available for repairs and maintenance should the need arise.

This proactive step reflects the community's determination to protect the investment and secure continued access to safe water.

The upgraded water system represents more than improved infrastructure—it is a symbol of hope, resilience, and the positive impact that strong partnerships can achieve. By providing reliable access to clean water, the project is improving health, supporting education, and enhancing the quality of life for hundreds of learners and families in Makumba Community.

The World Water Day celebration served as a reminder that access to clean water is fundamental to sustainable development and that collective action by communities, government, and development partners can create lasting change for future generations.





In commemoration of Menstrual Hygiene Day, observed annually on 28 May, Response Network Zambia conducted a menstrual hygiene sensitization session to empower girls supported under the Sponsorship Programme. The event, held at the Resource Centre, brought together 60 sponsored girls for an interactive learning experience focused on menstrual health, hygiene practices, and building confidence through open dialogue.

The session was graced by the Chairperson of the Response Network Advisory Board, Madam Florence Mudenda, who facilitated a discussion on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Through storytelling, guided discussions, and practical health education, she encouraged the girls to embrace their changing bodies with confidence while making informed decisions about their health and well-being.

The interactive nature of the session created a safe and supportive environment where participants openly shared their personal experiences with menstruation, discussed good hygiene practices, and exchanged views on the different menstrual products available to them. These conversations helped normalize menstruation and encouraged the girls to speak freely about a topic that is often surrounded by silence and stigma.

The menstrual hygiene session was made possible through the generous financial contributions of former Kubala girls—young women whose education was sponsored through the partnership between AKIND and Response Network Zambia. Having successfully completed their studies and entered various professions, these alumnae came together to give back by raising funds to purchase sanitary towels for the next generation of beneficiaries.

Reflecting on the initiative, Memory Mwelwa, one of the former Kubala girls who contributed to the fund-raising effort, said:

"It is heartwarming to look back and give back in a way that is within our means as former Kubala girls. Each one of us contributed what we could, and when we combined our contributions, we were able to buy sanitary pads for the girls. It is a small way of saying thank you and ensuring that the girls currently in the programme have the support they need to stay in school and pursue their dreams."

A key highlight of the session was an open discussion that addressed common myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation. Facilitators provided accurate information to clarify misunderstandings, helping to reduce stigma and equip the girls with reliable knowledge about menstrual health and hygiene. Throughout the session, participants remained actively engaged, asking questions, sharing experiences, and learning from one another. The discussions not only increased their understanding of menstrual hygiene but also strengthened their confidence and encouraged positive health practices.

As part of the initiative, all 60 girls received sanitary towels, ensuring they had access to essential menstrual hygiene materials. The distribution of sanitary products has become an ongoing component of the Sponsorship Programme, thanks to the continued generosity of former Kubala girls who remain committed to supporting younger beneficiaries.

This initiative highlights the importance of menstrual health education in promoting dignity, confidence, and well-being among adolescent girls. It also reflects the enduring impact of the Sponsorship Programme, where former beneficiaries are now giving back to uplift and inspire the next generation. Their generosity demonstrates the power of education, mentorship, and community solidarity in creating lasting, positive change. Smallholder Farmers in Kazungula See income boost through sustainable Agriculture Programme



Smallholder farmers in Kazungula District are reporting significant improvements in their livelihoods following the introduction of sustainable agriculture interventions by Response Network Zambia, in partnership with the Norwegian Church Aid–DanChurchAid Joint Country Programme (JCP) Zambia.

The initiative, which promotes organic farming, climate-smart agriculture, and agribusiness development, is helping rural households improve food security, increase incomes, and build resilience to climate change. The program's impact was showcased during a field visit by EFS Senior Advisor Tshego Nesvag from Oslo, Norway, who was accompanied by representative from Qystese. The delegation toured project sites in Makumba and Nampongo villages to assess progress and interact with beneficiary farmers.

In Makumba Village, the delegation visited farmer Cray, whose farm has become a model of successful sustainable agriculture. With support from the programme, including training and technical guidance, Cray has established a thriving garden with more than 6,000 plants, producing a variety of vegetables and crops.

Beyond crop production, Cray has expanded into poultry farming, reinvesting profits from his harvests to diversify his income streams. This has reduced his household's vulnerability and strengthened his farming enterprise.

In Nampongo Village, the delegation met Mr. Webster, a farmer who has built a successful vegetable business supplying markets in Livingstone. He currently manages about 5,000 heads of cabbage and has become a regular supplier of fresh produce to urban buyers.

Mr. Webster said the training he received under the programme has transformed his approach to farming. "The various training sessions have improved my knowledge and the way I manage my farming activities. This is no longer just farming—I am running a farming business," he said. "The profits I earn have improved my family's livelihood because I am now able to provide for their needs and invest back into my farm."

As part of the support, Mr. Webster also received a hand pump to improve irrigation on his farm, boosting production and efficiency.

"The water pump has greatly enhanced my gardening activities and increased my production," he added.

His farm has now become a direct source of fresh vegetables for buyers who travel to purchase produce on-site, reflecting growing demand and improved market access.

The field visit underscored the success of the partnership between Response Network Zambia, Norwegian Church Aid, and Dan Church Aid under the Joint Country Programme. Through training, access to farming inputs, equipment, and market linkages, the programme is helping farmers shift from subsistence farming to commercially viable agriculture.

The experiences of farmers like Cray and Mr. Webster highlight how sustainable agriculture is transforming rural livelihoods by increasing production, diversifying incomes, and strengthening business skills.

As the programme continues to expand across Southern Province, stakeholders say it is not only improving food security but also creating new opportunities for economic empowerment and long-term community development.

Nesbru, Eidsvoll, Slammestad and Stabekk students Immerse Themselves in Community Life During Visit to Zambia.



Students and teachers from four high schools in Norway recently embarked on a transformative visit to Zambia, hosted by Response Network Zambia (RN). The visit offered participants a unique opportunity to experience rural community life firsthand while witnessing the impact of the generous support that are improving access to education for children in the remote villages in Zimba and Kazungula Districts.

The four Norwegian schools are long-standing supporters of the Enhanced Youth Education (EYE) Programme. Through student-led fundraising initiatives, they have made a significant contribution to expanding educational opportunities in Zambia. To date, their support has enabled the construction of eight 1×3 classroom blocks and eight teachers' houses, creating better learning environments for children in the remote districts of Zimba and Kazungula Districts.

Accompanied by their teachers and representative from (Norwegian Church Aid), the visiting students visited Munyangwa Community School established through their support and Response Network's self-help development model. The visits provided valuable insight into how local communities, working alongside development partners, are mobilizing their own resources to improve access to quality education and create sustainable learning environments

Throughout their visit, the students and teachers interacted with learners, teachers, parents, and community members, gaining a deeper appreciation of the collective effort behind every classroom, teachers' house, and school improvement. These engagements demonstrated the power of partnership in expanding educational opportunities and strengthening rural communities.

One of the most memorable aspects of the exchange was the participants' immersion into everyday village life. Rather than simply observing, the visiting students and teachers lived alongside community members—sharing meals with host families, participating in daily household activities, engaging in community discussions, and spending nights in tents within the villages.



This hands-on experience provided a genuine understanding of rural life in Zambia, allowing participants to appreciate the resilience, hospitality, and determination of the communities they support. It also offered valuable opportunities for cultural exchange, fostering mutual learning and respect between the Zambian and Norwegian participants.

Reflecting on the experience, many students and teachers described the visit as both eye-opening and deeply inspiring. Witnessing community-led development in action helped them better understand how grassroots initiatives, supported through international partnerships, are transforming lives by improving access to education and creating opportunities for future generations.

The educational exchange forms part of Response Network Zambia's ongoing commitment to promoting global citizenship, strengthening international partnerships, and inspiring young people through meaningful engagement with development work. By connecting students across cultures, the programme not only supports improved educational infrastructure but also nurtures empathy, solidarity, and a shared commitment to creating positive change.

Through the continued partnership between Response Network Zambia, the participating Norwegian schools, the Enhanced Youth Education Programme continues to demonstrate how young people can become powerful agents of change—building classrooms, strengthening communities, and creating lasting friendships across borders.



Response Network Honors 20 Years of Dedicated Service as Frayor Chabauni Retires.



The Response Network family recently gathered at Bethani Acres Farm for a heartfelt farewell ceremony celebrating the remarkable career of Frayor Chabauni, who retires in December 2025 after 20 years of dedicated service.

Frayor has been part of Response Network almost since its inception, playing a foundational role in shaping the organization into what it is today. Her unwavering commitment, passion, and dedication have left a lasting impact not only on the organization but also on the communities it serves. Her contribution is deeply woven into the Response Network story and legacy.

The farewell event was marked by a warm atmosphere of celebration, gratitude, and reflection. Colleagues shared moving tributes and personal memories, describing Frayor as a mentor, encourager, and role model. Her professionalism, humility, and kindness were repeatedly highlighted as qualities that inspired many throughout her career.

Speaking during the event, Response Network Executive Director, Mr. Mutukwa Matenganya, paid tribute to Frayor’s exceptional service, noting:

“Her presence reminded us that while work is important, kindness and humanity are equally important—a gift that not everyone possesses.”

He further commended her dedication beyond her formal responsibilities, stating: “She demonstrated remarkable initiative and dedication beyond her administrative responsibilities.”

As Frayor Chabauni steps into a new chapter of life, Response Network extends its deepest appreciation for her outstanding service and the countless lives she has touched over the past two decades. Her legacy of integrity, compassion, and commitment will continue to inspire both current and future generations of staff and partners.

The organization expresses its heartfelt gratitude and best wishes to Frayor for a fulfilling retirement filled with good health, joy, and continued blessings.

“Thank you you for your dedicated service to the Organisation and the Community”.

Kalomo District Commissioner Hails Sports as a Tool for Community Development



The Kalomo District Commissioner has praised the growing role of sport in driving community development after visiting Kalonda, where Response Network Zambia is implementing its Sports for Development Programme.

The visit, which took place on Monday 20th April 2026, coincided with a lively Baseball 5 tournament that brought together youth teams from across the area. The Commissioner took time to watch the matches and interact with young players, gaining firsthand insight into the rapidly growing sport and its impact on local communities.

Beyond the competition on the field, the visit highlighted how sport is being used as a platform for empowerment and economic transformation. Several teams involved in the programme have introduced income-generating activities to support their sporting initiatives and improve their livelihoods.

One of the teams, Black Stars, has ventured into goat rearing as a sustainable source of income. Another team, Kalonda United, has taken a different approach by producing more than 15,000 bricks, which are being used to generate income and support team activities.

The District Commissioner, accompanied by the District Administrative Officer, engaged with team leaders and community members on a range of issues. Discussions focused on the progress of income-generating projects, efforts to prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV),

and the opportunities available through the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) to support youth and community initiatives.

He encouraged the teams to take full advantage of government empowerment programs to expand their businesses while continuing to use sport as a tool for positive change in their communities.

In a separate engagement, Zambia Baseball & Softball Association President, Mr. Kenny Matishi, commended Response Network Zambia for its continued efforts in promoting community sport and youth development.

Mr. Matishi noted that the introduction of Baseball5 and other community sports programs has created valuable opportunities for young people to build leadership skills, promote inclusion, and engage in productive economic activities.

The visit underscored the growing partnership between government, sporting bodies, and community organizations in promoting sustainable development through sport. It also reaffirmed Response Network Zambia's commitment to empowering young people by combining sport, entrepreneurship, and life skills training.

Through its Sports for Development Programme, the organization continues to strengthen community resilience and create opportunities that extend far beyond the playing field in Kalomo District.



In the heart of Mweemba, a quiet transformation is taking place, driven by community members who believe that development begins with them. At the centre of this movement is Moses Katambo, a dedicated Community Volunteer with Response Network whose commitment to self-help and community-driven development continues to inspire positive change.

Moses embodies the spirit of lifelong learning. Following every Community Education Program (CEP) training, he does not simply take the lessons home; he puts them into action. He uses the knowledge and skills gained from the trainings to identify challenges within his community, mobilise people and encourage them to find practical solutions using locally available resources. His proactive approach has earned him recognition as a champion of change in Mweemba.

One of the initiatives Moses has helped spearhead is the construction of teachers' houses at Mweemba Community School. Recognising the importance of adequate accommodation in attracting and retaining teachers, he mobilised community members to contribute K400 per household. Through this collective effort, an impressive K64,000 was raised towards the construction of teachers' houses. The initiative demonstrates what communities can achieve when they come together around a shared vision for improving education.

Moses has also played a key role in efforts to complete an Early Childhood Education shelter, creating a safer and more conducive learning environment for young children. His commitment to education extends beyond children. After an awareness meeting on the importance of education for all, he championed adult and youth education in the community. Today, 50 participants, comprising 35 women and girls and 15 men and boys, attend classes every Monday, Wednesday and Friday with support from the Ministry of Education.

Sanitation is another area where Moses has mobilised community action. He is spearheading efforts to promote the construction of pit latrines across Liluli, Mulamfu, Mokoziwa and Miyanda villages. The initiative is helping households take practical steps towards improving sanitation, hygiene and community health.

Understanding that good roads are essential for development, Moses has also mobilised community members to clear bushes and create accessible roads. These efforts are making it easier for people to move within the community while improving access to markets, services and other opportunities.

His vision for Mweemba does not end with the progress already made. Moses continues to encourage community members to support the expansion of Mweemba Community School from its current one-by-two classroom block to five classrooms. His goal is to ensure that more children can access quality education within their own community.

Moses believes that sustainable development is achieved when communities take ownership of their challenges and work together to address them. His efforts in Mweemba are a powerful demonstration of the self-help approach, where communities identify their priorities, mobilise local resources and take collective action to create lasting solutions.

"Together, we can achieve greatness," Moses says.

His dedication has also earned the respect and admiration of community leaders. "Moses is a gamechanger," says Community Leader Mrs. Banda. "His dedication to our community's development is inspiring. We're proud to have him leading the charge."

The transformation taking place in Mweemba is ultimately a story of collective action. While Moses has played a significant role in mobilising and inspiring the community, the progress belongs to everyone who has contributed, participated and believed in what can be achieved together.

From education and sanitation to infrastructure and community mobilisation, Mweemba is demonstrating the power of communities taking charge of their own development. Moses Katambo's story is a reminder that one committed community volunteer can inspire an entire community to believe in a better future—and, more importantly, to work together to build it.

THE END

THANK YOU FOR READING