

DIGNITY UPDATE: Zambia

Overview

What a couple of months it has been! We have travelled quite literally thousands of kilometres and between all of our teams spoken to hundreds of people about the life changing message of Jesus and the need to work to transform our community. We have visited far flung places like Kenya or remote parts of Zambia and all of the time we have carried on planting new groups and supporting existing ones. We continue with our everyday work with the Life Groups but our message is beginning to travel wider. People from DRC, Barundi, Kenya, Liberia and Uganda have expressed an interest in working with us.

We have taken quite a large step forward by publishing [The Away Kit](#) (a guide to planting Life Groups) as well as making our Plant training course available online. This will be closely followed by making training videos available online.

As I (Jon) listened to Oscar Muriu at the Viral conference in Kenya, it seemed to me that Dignity is quite well placed to help the church to be the church within Africa in the coming years. This is really quite phenomenal. [Listen to Oscar Muriu here and as you listen, think of Life Groups!](#)



Dignity Zambia

- **Databases and Resources:** We have been working hard to improve all of the metrics and information that we request. You will see some of the fruits of these labours in the numbers this month. The database has seen vast improvement and together with this we have started tracking groups that have stopped or are seasonal in their nature.

Life Groups (including Deeper Campaign)

- In the last month, we have started recording two more statistics concerning Life Groups.
 - **Life Groups that have stopped** and would need to be replanted to start meeting again. This reduces the overall amount of active Life Groups which may seem like bad news, however it means we can intentionally focus our effort on those places again. Around 10% of Life Groups have stopped over the last 10 years.
 - **Life Groups that meet seasonally** due to people migrating for farming or livelihood.
- Life Group numbers are now fully updated for Zambia. Namibian numbers will be updated this month.
- **The good news is that Life Groups grew in the last 4 months by a nearly equal number to the amount that have stopped in total in the last 10 years. There are currently 606 active groups with 31 of them being seasonal. That's quite a staggering thought!**
- **TESTIMONY:** A particular story stuck out for me during the last 2 months. We were talking to Gervas who organises the Central South Zambia Team. During a training session 2 months ago, a lady was brought in who could not walk. She was literally carried in on a stretcher. The people wanted Gervas and the rest of the team to pray for this lady. Gervas refused and explained that rather than him pray it was better if the people gathered for the training to pray for the lady. This goes against so much culturally; the people in the village saw themselves as not able to pray. **Eventually the people agreed to pray and the lady WALKED home! God healed her miraculously through the prayer of the villagers NOT the team! That's the point of Life Groups!**

Impact Teams

- **All of the changes that have been made to Impact teams in the last few months can be summed up in 2 words – flexibility and resilience.** The teams are now generally larger with people having the freedom to rotate in and out each month. Problem people are fading away and new people are being trained. The notes below are taken from a leadership update session we had in Mid August.
- **Luapula North** Around 25% drop in groups due to team issues in 2017. Some groups are training other groups. **Positives:** New team members are getting involved. **Challenges:** Some life groups are not running as well as they can do, especially those established by the team members with whom we had problems.
- **Luapula Central** **Positives:** Trainings are successful, Life Groups are started and run well. The work brings unity between believers and the community. Life Groups are planting other Life Groups in their area. **Challenges:** An issue of village banking,

a programme introduced by an NGO which has led to widespread theft of money by individuals. For that reason Life Groups avoid this programme. There is also an issue of doctrine with some Life Groups believing this is an Anglican programme. Some Life Groups are not fully committed and are not planting other groups.

- **Mpika** Generally things are good, groups are meeting. The cluster members have started raising new groups. People are learning and trying to live out the Gospel. Because of the distance people have to travel some clusters are not meeting regularly. Some clusters are failing to multiply and start groups but we are seeing overall growth.
- **Central South Positives:** The leaders meet every month to make the programme. The Life Groups are still meeting and are forming new Life Groups. They appreciate the method of meeting in small groups. Almost all of the clusters are doing well. **Challenges:** The team itself has shrunk and there has been a little bit more work. Erratic rainfall has led to lots of challenges with food and so people are understandably focused on surviving which affects attendance at meetings. This affects the groups and leads to a seasonal pattern, often most common in villages far from the road.
- **Central East** This area is going well, good even. **Positives:** Where Life Groups are meeting, the members are really benefitting and appreciating the teachings. Through the Life Groups, churches are also benefitting because the teachings filter into the church, helping the believers. The leaders are also able to raise new leaders, impact the community and the church. **Challenges:** In some areas there is resistance against the groups with accusations of Satanism or witchcraft. People are also grappling with church denomination and doctrines which have led to quite a divided community. Some Life Groups are struggling as a result of this, feeling that it is a personal attack.
- **North Western Positives:** Groups are active and new members are involved. Previous accusations of Satanism have gone. **Challenges:** Some groups are not active, when a group leader moves away the group finds itself in limbo. The large distances involved means it is a problem to meet as leaders.
- **TESTIMONY:** Gervas recently gave us a sense of how remote some communities are when he said, "Talking about knowing the Gospel, there are some places that don't even know the president." As Bernard said, "We are here to see what the Almighty is doing, we are seeing what hasn't been done - many in the villages that have not been reached." The Luapula North team is about to travel to one such community where there is no church and to run training.

The New and Expanded Numbers from Southern Africa (incl. Developing Regions)

Measurable	Number to date, 2018	Previous Update	End 2017	Comments <i>(*these numbers are cumulative since Dignity began. All other numbers are for the current year)</i>
Number of Active Life Groups*	606			These numbers are from the latest numbers audit and compiled from teams Life Group Reports.
<i>(Number of which meet seasonally)</i>	31			New measurements: We have begun to track stopped groups and differentiate seasonal groups (where a group migrates part of the year due to farming, fishing etc.) This measurement will help us intentionally focus on areas that need extra input.
Number of Life Groups currently paused or stopped*	67			
Total number of Life Groups Planted*	673	615	574	
Distinct Life Group Areas Planted*	210			New measurement
Number of clusters*	34	31	31	
Trained Impact Team Missionaries *	61	45	47	
Active Impact Team Missionaries this year to date.	43			New measurement: We now mark team members as inactive if they are not currently contributing. The number of trained members has risen.
Impact Team Areas*	15	14	13	Includes small beginnings in Kenya
Impact Team Training course (visit or central EQUIP)	9	tbc	10	Including Kenya and other assessment visits
<i>Intelligence</i> Schools of Evangelism	2	0	5	
Areas Initial Visit	93	tbc	71	Data from 4 main teams
Life! Group Training Courses	24	tbc	79	Trainings normally run between April and September
Encouragement visits	176	25	25	
Volunteer hours	21,376	18,968	23,296	*Estimated figures based on 1 leader volunteering 4 hours/month per Life Group

DIGNITY UPDATE: Developing Regions

Namibia (with crossover to Botswana)

- **Upcoming work:** Late September – mid October a number of activities will be taking place in Namibia with the aim of bolstering and extend the existing team. The team is currently working well month by month. This trip involved thousands of kilometers of driving. At the time of writing, the plan is:
 - A **major team training event in Rundu** with people from Angola and elsewhere in Namibia. (First week of October)
 - **Existing team training and vision day** for Sesheke (actually in Zambia but closer to the Namibian team) and hopefully 2 places in Botswana.

Tanzania

- At our visit at the end of July, we met with Frank and Edward and went through the process of planning and requesting budgets. In practice, this has proved slightly problematic with lots of miscommunication happening. Despite this the team in Tanzania wanted to action a training for Life Groups in September. We have had to pause it until we can get the communication sorted out. Hopefully by next time we report, everything will be working well.
- **Our Plant training resource is now published in Swahili!**

Kenya

- ‘Kenya Month’ went well I believe. In summary, four main activities were accomplished.
 - **Spending time with African leaders at the NewThing ‘Viral’ conference in Nairobi.** This has led to fledgling relationships with people from elsewhere in Kenya, Liberia, Uganda, Tanzania and Barundi.
 - I presented two seminars on ‘What are Life Groups and How to Plant them’ attended by about 120 in total. In particular a response from Beatrice who is part of a ministry working with street children in Nairobi has been particularly strong. **They want to start using Life Groups to reach out and create the church within the street communities of Nairobi.**
 - Judith and I visited Ganze, an area where we planted the Life Group vision last year. **7 Life Groups (5 of which are strong) are running in the area, which is fantastic.** We were encouraged by the story of one group who have brought some Muslims to faith and have also taught people how to plant and grow Moringa trees to generate an income.
 - **I spoke at the ‘Prolific’ conference in Mombasa.** The response was not quite as good, but the conference was a lot smaller with about 60 people attending (compared to 1,500 in Nairobi).

[At every meeting and venue, the free download of the Away Kit was offered.](#)

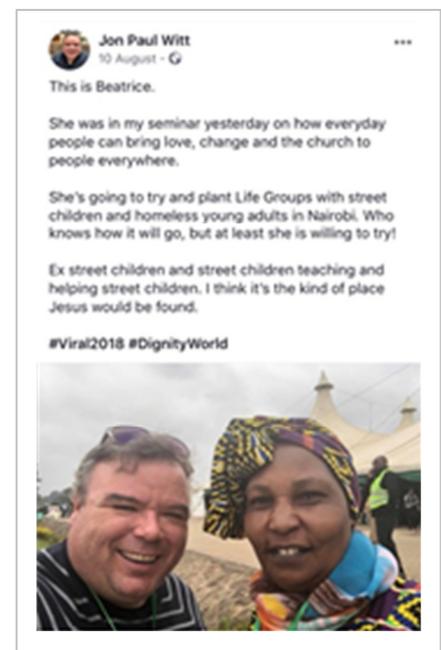
- There are two needs that we must fulfil in Kenya. One is for **availability of materials**. The other is to enable some **rudimentary follow up and support for the existing groups**. Jude and I tried discussed the possibility of involvement with Walter who has been working with Tobias and us to date. Unfortunately he is not available in the long run, however he is available to support the groups in Ganze in the short term. Watch this space!

Katanga Province, Southern Democratic Republic of Congo

At the beginning of September, Bertin Mwanya from Lubumbashi joined us for our training course focusing on equipping new team members. Bertin is the leader of a Pentecostal church in the outskirts of Lubumbashi. Lubumbashi itself is a city of 9 million people, the majority living in peri-urban settings – many of the outskirts are like a huge village. **Bertin seems to be keen to develop the work of Dignity in his region.** To this end, he wants to **translate Plant into French. He has also invited us to train a wider group of people either later this year or early next.**

3 Key Items for Prayer

- Pray for the Tanzanian fledgling team. There seems to be communication and still misunderstanding in the way. Pray that is removed and solved.
- Pray for the opportunities to bolster fledgling teams and to present the work to new people.
- Pray for Jon and Jude as they travel, together with the teams, for safety and fun!



DIGNITY UPDATE: Central Administration

CORE

Overview

Throughout July and August we have continued to work hard on our materials and publications to help share our knowledge with others. Our UK team is changing shape as Maral has moved onto a new job and we are looking for new team members.

Core: Sharing our Knowledge

- **The Away Kit and Plant** have been completed and published on our website. Plant is now available in English, Bemba, Lunda and Swahili! Further translations to follow.
- We have pushed forward with our **Foundations Series**. Field testing of **Foundations 1: Life Begins** highlighted a few items to edit. **Foundations 2: Life Grows** is currently being trialled in Zambia. **Foundations 3: Life Creates** has been compiled and will be sent for a short print run. **Foundations 4: Life Matures** will be edited by the end of September, ready for compilation.
- The Bemba version of **Love Your Village** is now ready to print and the **Lunda version of Rooted in Jesus 4** is ready to send.
- Work continues on upgrading our **digital solutions**. This is the first step towards **publishing our materials and training sessions digitally**.

Core: General

- We have submitted our **Directors’ and Trustees’ Report for 2017** to Companies House and The Charity Commission.
- **Huge thanks to all those who responded to our appeal to help cover the costs of Jon & Jude’s trip to Ganze, Kenya**. You can read about their trip on the previous page.

People

- At the end of August, **Maral** moved on to a new job. We are so grateful to Maral for all she has brought to Dignity and are cheering her on in her next endeavours.
- **Job descriptions** have been prepared for 2 part time roles in the UK team. We are looking to bring some digital expertise and administrative support into the team. Please do pass on our advert to anyone who may be interested.

Resources

- We have received **87 Bibles through our Bible Recycle scheme** in the last 2 months, the majority of which have come from 1 donor. Thank you!

Visits & Events

- ‘Friends of Dignity’ gathered in August to hear about **Love Your Children** and to pray together. It was so encouraging hearing from Jan, Katy and Kate how Love Your Children has taken shape with a guiding theme of exploring what the Bible says about children. We are hugely thankful for the care, wisdom and time they have invested in this resource.
- We are planning an evening to **equip others to start Life Group movements** through connections they have in Africa or elsewhere. This will use The Away Kit.
- **Jon Witt will be speaking at Lunch** in November.

Fundraising

- We have submitted 3 **trust fund applications**. We hope to submit 2 or 3 more by the end of October.

Finances

- Since our last report 1 **regular gift** has been increased and we have received a steady flow of **one-off gifts**.

The Numbers

Measurable	Number to date, 2018	Number at end of 2017	Comments
Movement in regular monthly giving	+£127.50	+£340.83	Refer to finance report for further information
Total number of regular givers	52	48	Now includes churches and individuals
Trust fund applications made	3	4	
Prayer meetings held	1	3	
Events & church visits happened	4	3	
Bibles recycled this year	268 received 316 sent	180 received 112 sent	Total Bibles recycled to date = 871 (of which 112 are awaiting shipping)
Translations in progress/completed	7	8	In progress: , Living the Light (Bemba), Plant Tonga Completed: Plant (Bemba, Lunda & Swahili), LYV Bemba, RinJ 4 Lunda
Volunteer hours (UK)	79.25	309	



Bibles received in the last 2 months!