Kufambatose Foundation
Progressing together

Newsletter August 2021

Dear reader,

It's already been a year ago since we informed you via a newsletter about the developments of our project in Zimbabwe. In addition, you received information via our "Christmas Card" in 2020 and via the "Ring the Bell" campaign this March.


Queue in front of the hospital grounds,
waiting for permission to enter for the Covid-19 test

We (Willemijn, her family and Annemiek Simons) just returned, safe and sound, from a project visit in Zimbabwe. We dared to make the trip, despite the travel restrictions that still apply in connection with the corona virus. But armed with a negative Covid-19 test, a letter that grants tourist travelling in Zimbabwe by the local police, and a registration of our district office in Zaka, we have been able to view and experience the project successfully, together with the Revalidation team.

We stayed in a guest house, belonging to the Musiso Hospital, and we were well looked after by the nuns of the convent!

During our visit we met some important people in the Ndanga District Hospital and the Musiso Hospital, and from various organizations that our local team cooperates with.

Besides that, we went out and visited various children at their homes, together with the revalidation team.
We experienced many impressions. Below you will find an illustration.

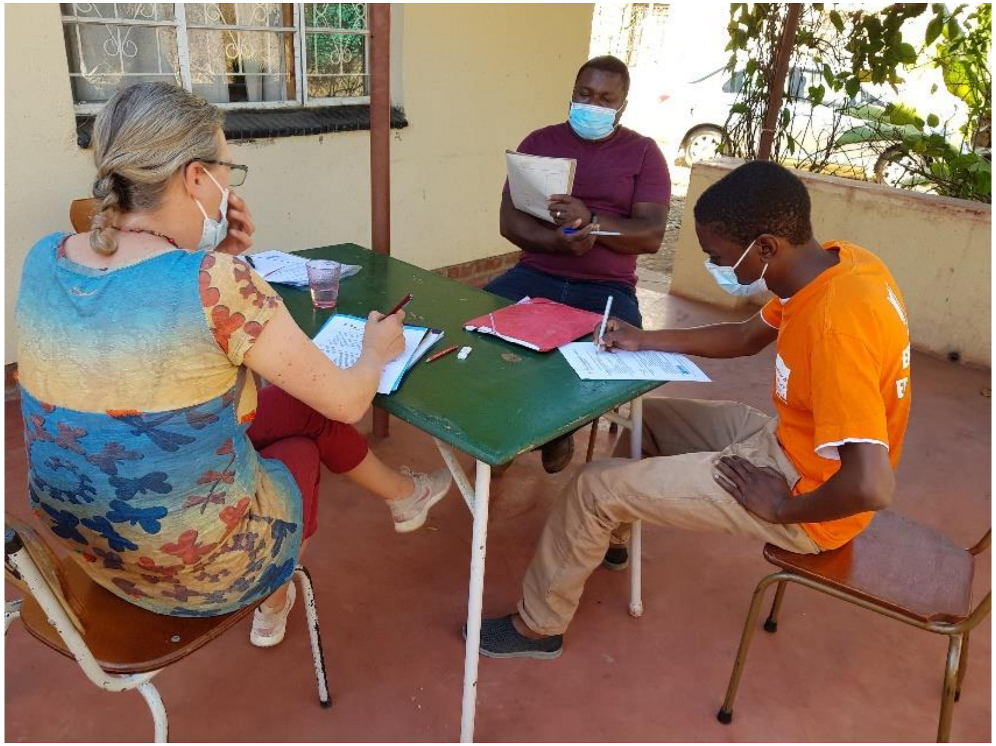
The Corona situation

The last year was dominated by the coronavirus worldwide. In the district where the Kufambatose project is running, corona infections do occur here and there. We experienced that hygienic measures are excellent! You can't enter a shop without first disinfecting your hands. Face masks are compulsory everywhere, both indoors and outdoors. Distance is kept most of the times. Travelling by public transport has almost completely disappeared. Moreover, travelling outside your own village is limited to the minimum. Where necessary, a letter of approval by the police is needed. Control is strict, there are many roadblocks.

To enter the hospital grounds, you are first tested with a rapid test. If the result is negative, you may enter the grounds. If positive, you are sent home. The advice then is to sanitize your house, sequester yourself home, be outdoors a lot, get Vitamin D from the sun, and be in motion at least 2 hours a day. With serious complaints you will be admitted to hospital, of course, but at a special Covid ward.

Schools have been closed for more than a year. Some secondary schools offered online lessons, but with poor internet connections this was not attainable for everybody. Youth hang out around the house. Not at all a desirable situation. In September both primary and secondary schools started again. There is a lot of work to be done to catch up even slightly, and to get secondary school pupils motivated to study again.

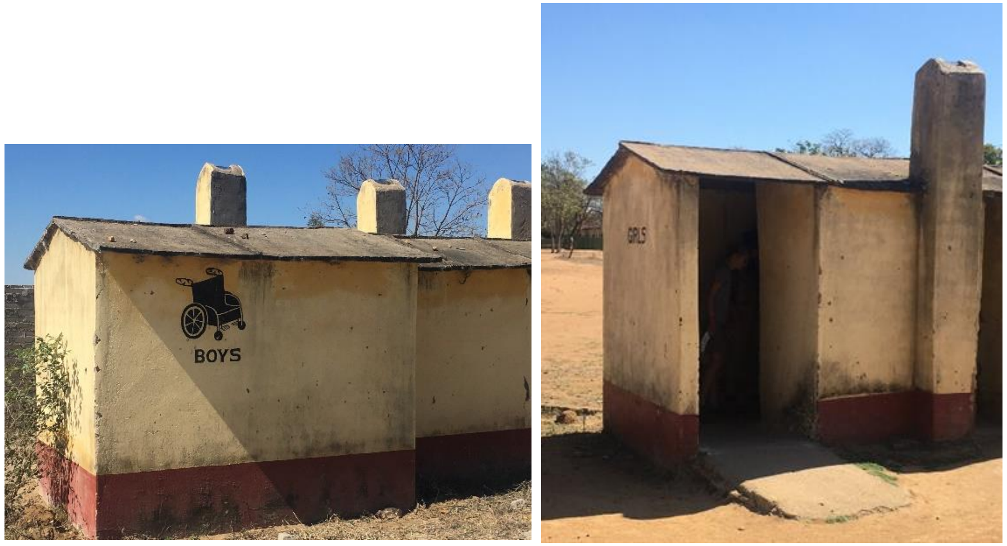
Our local Revalidation team



Willemijn in a meeting with members of the Revalidation team

We met a fantastic team that is growing in running the project independently.

The local Trust Kufamba, established in late 2020, offers a wide range of opportunities for collaboration with various organizations. such as Wilde Ganzen, with for example ‘Change the Game’, a course ‘How do I find local funds to become independent?’



A WC accessible for disabled people

And there is support of the LCDZ (Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe) regarding Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR). Particular emphasis is placed on e.g., the provision of tools, sharing the support for food packages for the families, funding possibilities for financing tuition fees for the disabled children that are able to go to school, etc.

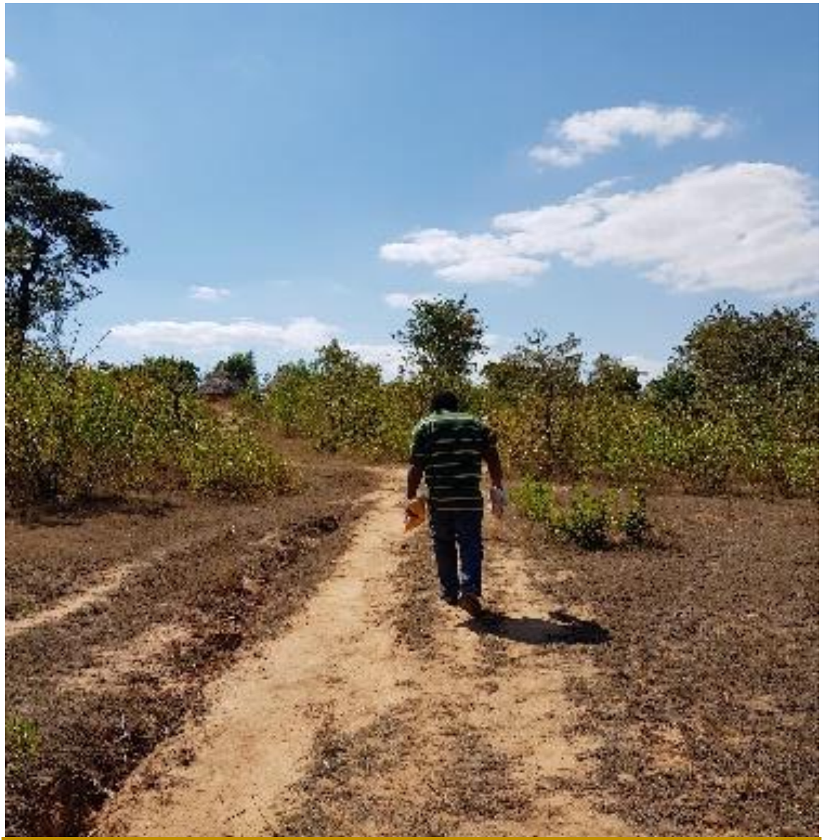
We were particularly impressed, however, by the tremendous involvement of the team, and by the care for the disabled children and the care for the social circumstances of the families. We saw a warm heart with all three Rehabilitation Technicians with whom we were working. In particular our local project coordinator and chairman of the Trust, Samson Mazivazvose, spends a lot of time on our project.

It is surely good to see that. It gives us a lot of faith in the future. Samson’s words: ‘We have a big dream’. It’s his pride that this is the only project in Zimbabwe that is run and developed in its current form. He most certainly will not let it go. He goes all the way and together with another member of the revalidation team he has applied for a management course at the University in Zimbabwe, to be able to develop the trust even better.

We can’t imagine a better coordinator.

Home visits

As the workshops in the hospital could not be continued due to Corona, home visits will be made instead. Samson makes these visits by motorbike, which has been acquired by means of sponsorship in 2020. We accompanied him on several home visits and visited two support groups at the homes of local guest families.



On our way to Cynthia, a 15 minutes' walk after an hour's drive in a car on a dirt road with potholes.

An impression

We drove far, about 60 km, into the bush. Unimaginable sometimes, how far away people live from real villages/ amenities/ shops, etc. They are mainly self-supporting. Or they trade maize/chickens etc. for clothes or other necessities.

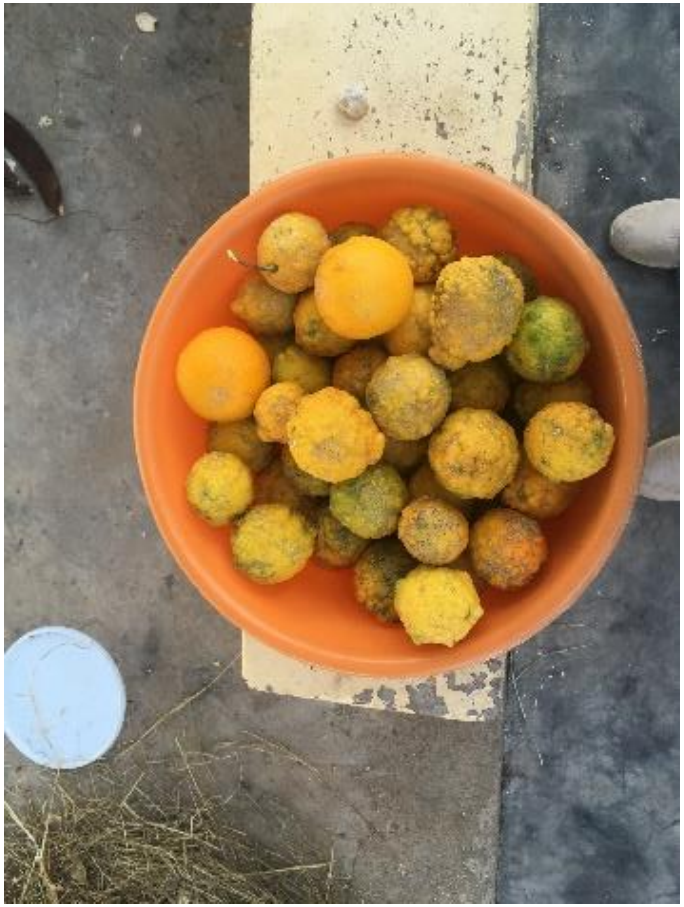
The home visits are deliberately not announced in advance. They want to see the actual situation. That seems to vary a lot. From a child that is lying on its belly in accord with the instruction, to a child that is sitting on its mat, a little bit neglected. From very poor circumstances but motivated to give the child as much as possible, to a well-organized household with a large kitchen and a good vegetable garden, who still say that they have too little food – well, one can always use more, of course. The proceeds from our gift of maize seed in the autumn of 2020 has produced a good harvest for most people.

All showed a lot of gratitude to us, here and there clearly incited by the Rehabilitation technicians Samson and Machipi. We answered that it was especially good to see that their disabled children received sufficient attention from their parents. That that is what matters to us.

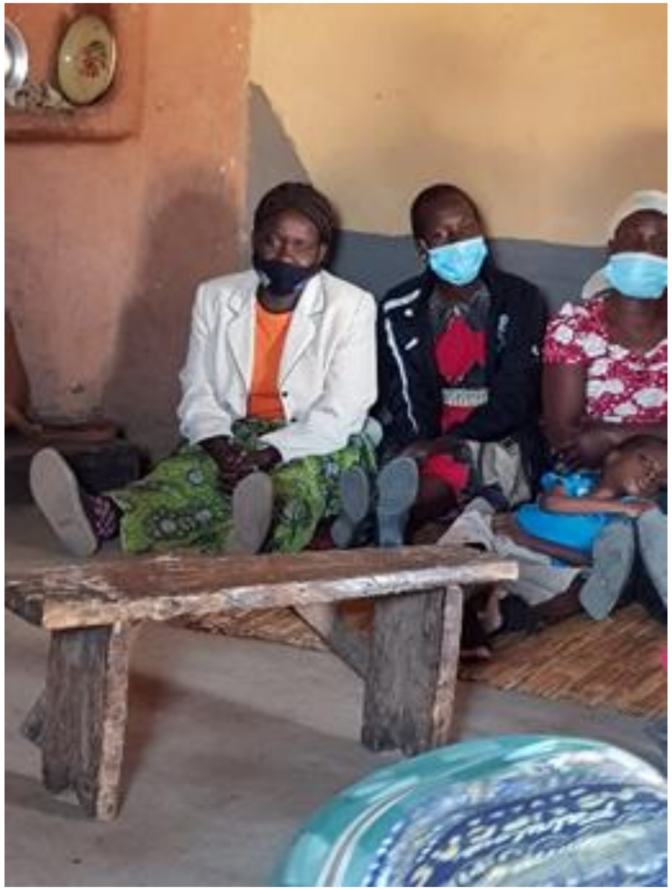
Among the support groups, people sang and prayed, both at the start and the completion, of course.

Pictures of the group including us were really important. Furthermore, we received 'gifts' at various places: fresh carrots from the garden, groundnuts, lemons fresh from the tree ('corona medicine' because of the vitamins), fresh tangerines, …

Attention for our project and the support of disabled children was also shown by local administrators.



Fresh lemons as 'corona medicine'



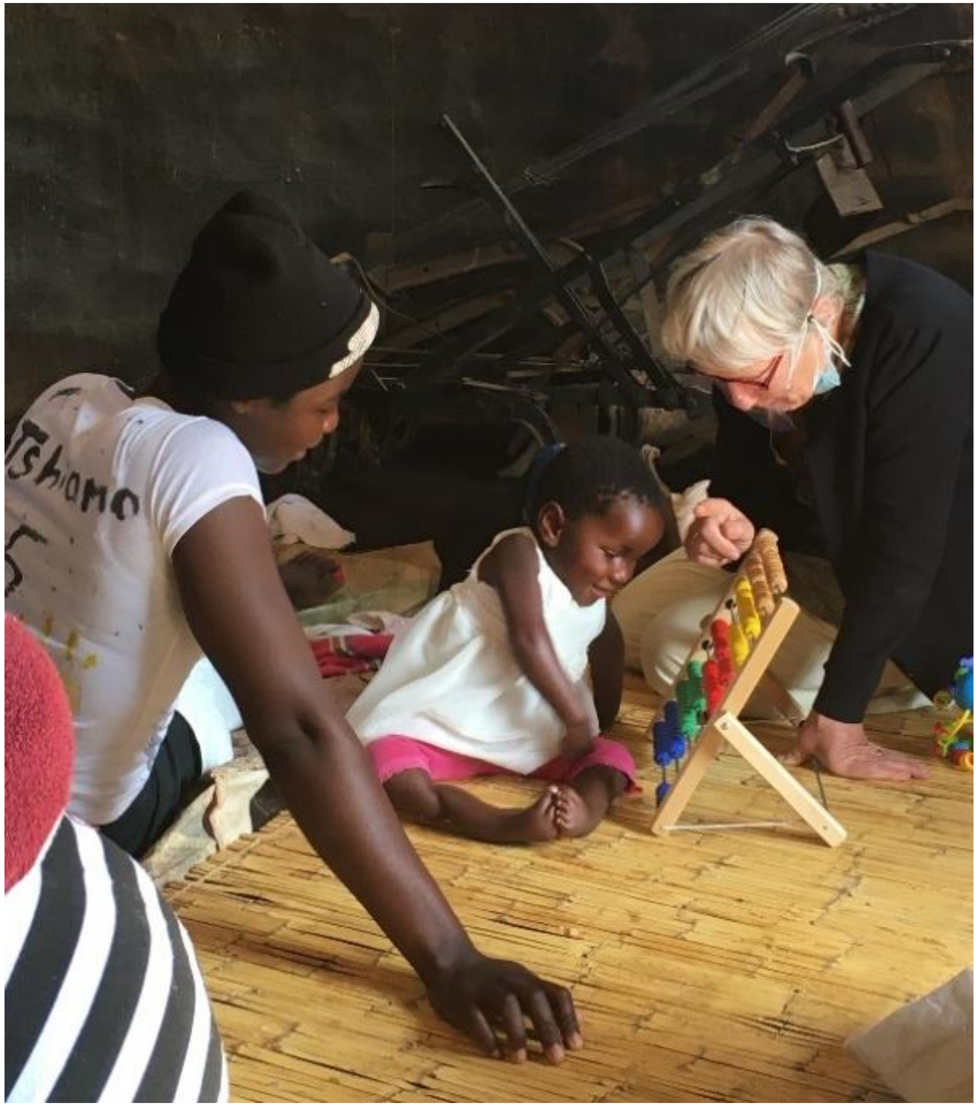
The Counselor and her secretary

At one support group only the counsellor's secretary showed up, initially. The counsellor herself came later, after returning from a funeral. A counsellor may preside over about 50 village heads. The village head was present the whole day, too. He appeared to drop by more often, and he saw the children's progress. They stayed all day, and they shared sadza in the afternoon.

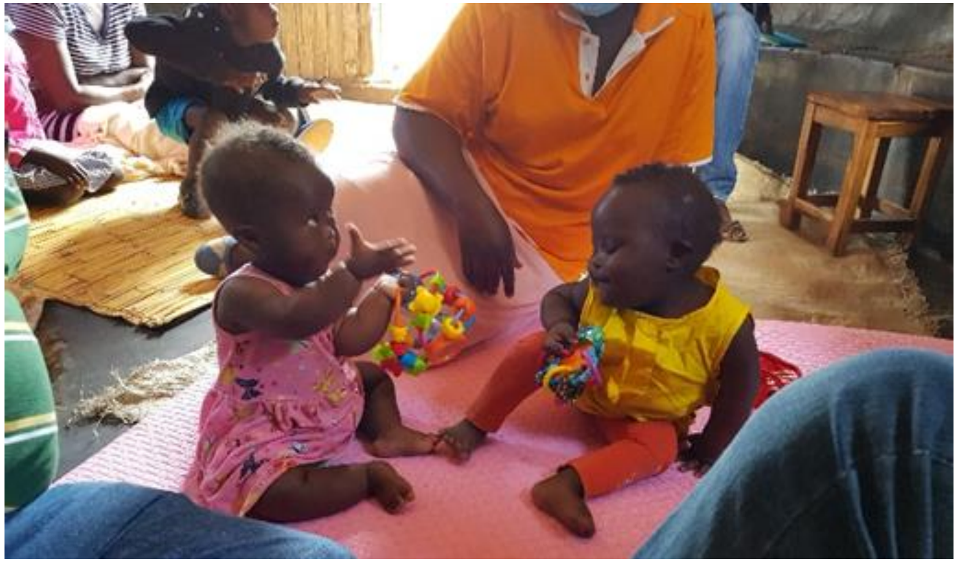
The revalidation team brought food to prepare. On arrival there was tea and bread. Later in the afternoon there was a meal with a lot of sadza (a kind of thick porridge made of ground maize), white beans in tomato sauce and chicken. A few mothers cooked outdoors, on an open fire.

Per support group we saw 7 – 12 children, who lived on walking distance (sometimes for several hours) from the guest families.

It was great to meet people this way in their own environment.
To see all kinds of children with different handicaps, some with a handicap that need not have caused serious disabilities here. But giving attention (too) late, or just no money to go to a hospital, or being sent home by a large hospital because you can't afford follow-up treatment.


Child and mother are glad about the attention in this support group.
New possibilities!

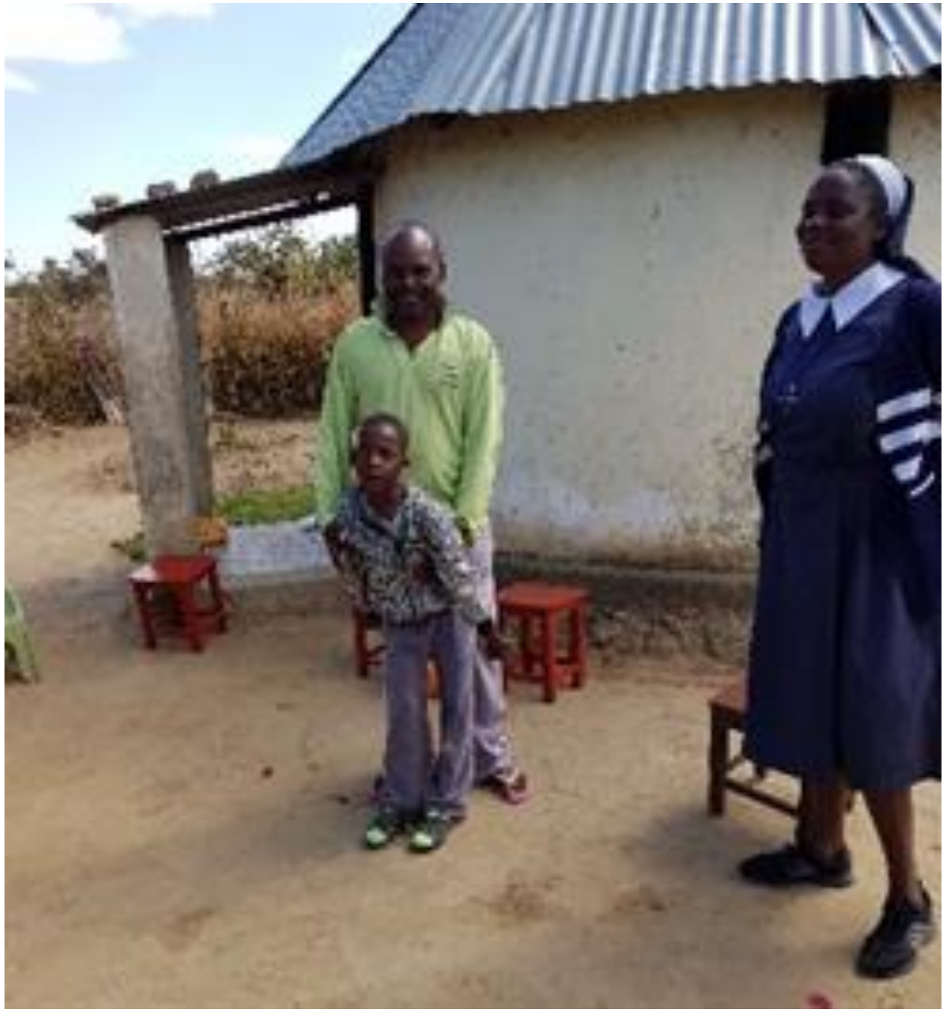
And if these children and their parents get attention, assistance, and therapy within our project, you ease their circumstances considerably. Therefore, contact with peers in support groups is very welcome!



Two cute little sisters with Down syndrome

We also saw sad home situations among cast out mothers. Isolated, not daring to go outside, living in a tiny room, with no income. Under those circumstances, attention, a little chat, and food aid are indispensable.

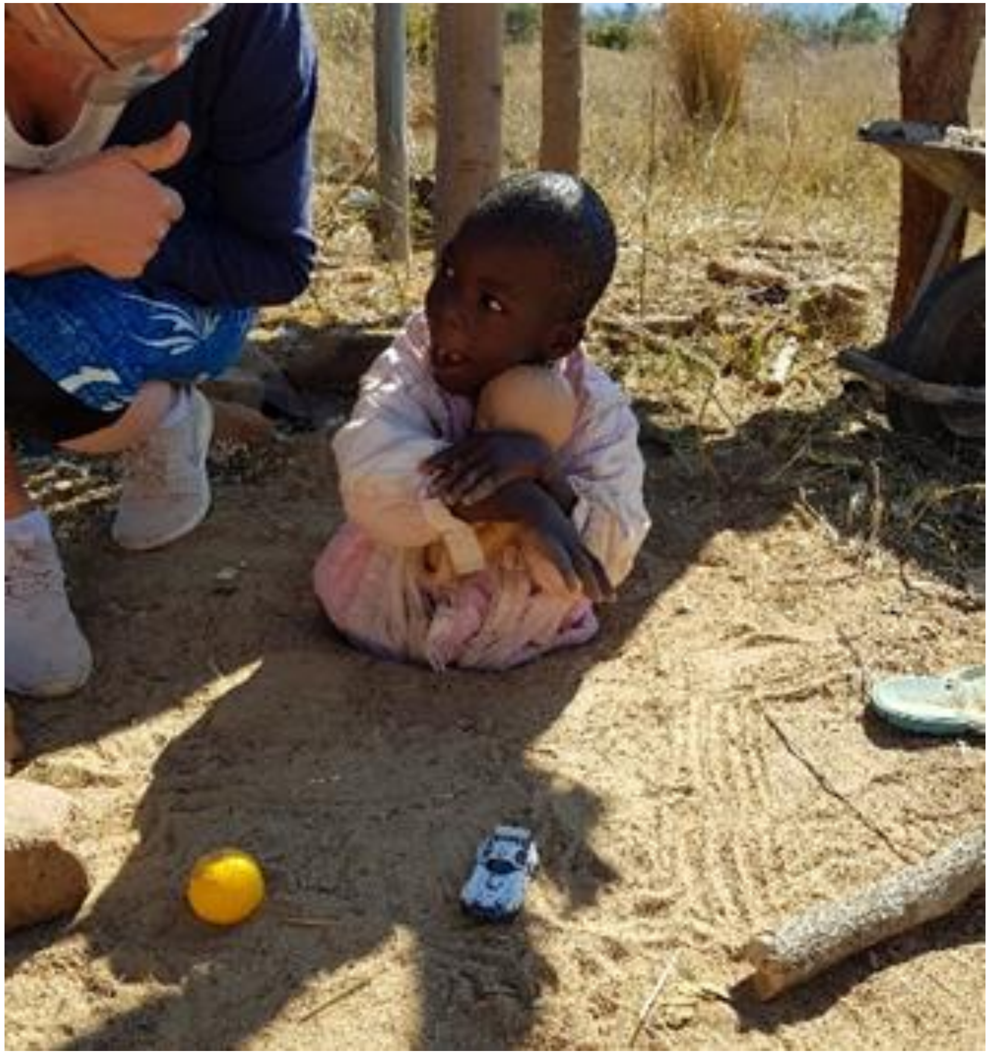
But also, a child that lives with its father during the week, because he is a teacher in a place far away, and takes his 10-year-old son with him, so that he can attend kindergarten at the school where he works. Full acceptance and fully integrated in the community. That's one way of doing it.



A special bond between father and son

Or a father who makes a very long footbridge, so that the child can learn to make steps, with the help of its mother.

And a mother who figured out a way to make a ‘standing table’, a device in which a spastic child can learn to stand and put pressure on its joints so that they can develop as normally as possible.
A mother came up with a hole in the ground in which the child could stand up to the hips, and thus could play with its hands on the ground as a “table”. Here in the Netherlands Child Protection would show up, but it was a great solution!



Girl in ‘stand-up table’ invented by her mother:
a hole in the ground.

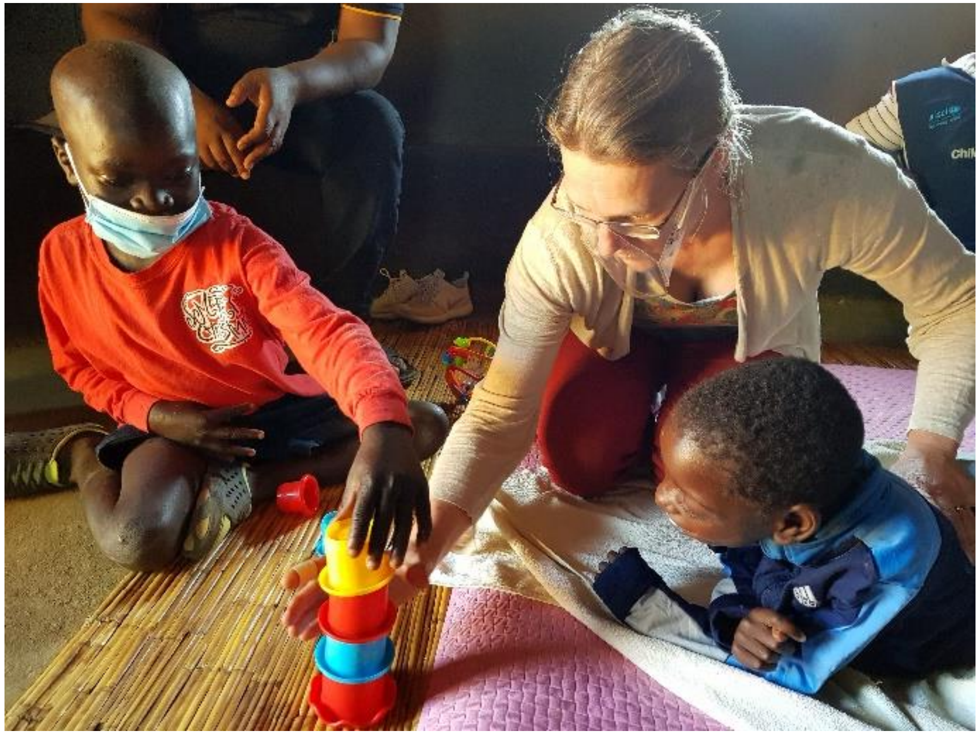
We saw clear progress in the development of the children. The communication between the Rehabilitation Technician and the children and mothers was good. With a laugh some lightness was given. There was a child with a light epileptic fit, for example, that was "offline" for a moment and then "online" again. This was met with laughter.

Or a 6-year-old child that developed from permanently lying on its back to rolling over independently and move in a sitting position, after one year in the program.

A ten-year-old boy who developed from lying position only to walking independently on uneven ground around his home to his neighbours, after 4 years of therapy. Still a little unstable, but never falling. Now he is integrated in the community and attends school, albeit at a low learning level. But he does attend school now!

A spastic boy who is now playing in sitting position with the tower and abacus we brought with us. With special thanks to Stichting Speelcadeau, Speelgoedbank Eindhoven. Now there are new ways to practice eye-hand coordination.

We saw many happy children's faces and how much energy that gives to continue this work; how happy it makes you!



Playing together is fun!

All these impressions have made a strong impact again. It gives a strong feeling of being connected. As Ubuntu philosophy says: "We are connected, therefore we are."

We truly experienced that we are “Progressing together – Kufambatose’. The children, the parents, the revalidation team, we, we are connected, and so we have the right to be!

To conclude

We hope that you enjoyed reading his newsletter again. We saw many great things, a Revalidation team with a warm heart, children with a smile on their faces, grateful parents, … But sad situations, too.
And we saw that developments can move very slowly, caused by the rigid structures in Zimbabwe.
It will take a lot of time and patience before the project can really run independently.
But as long as we feel your supporting engagement we will succeed!

Should you wish to know more about us or our project in Zimbabwe, you can visit our website: www.kufambatose.eu

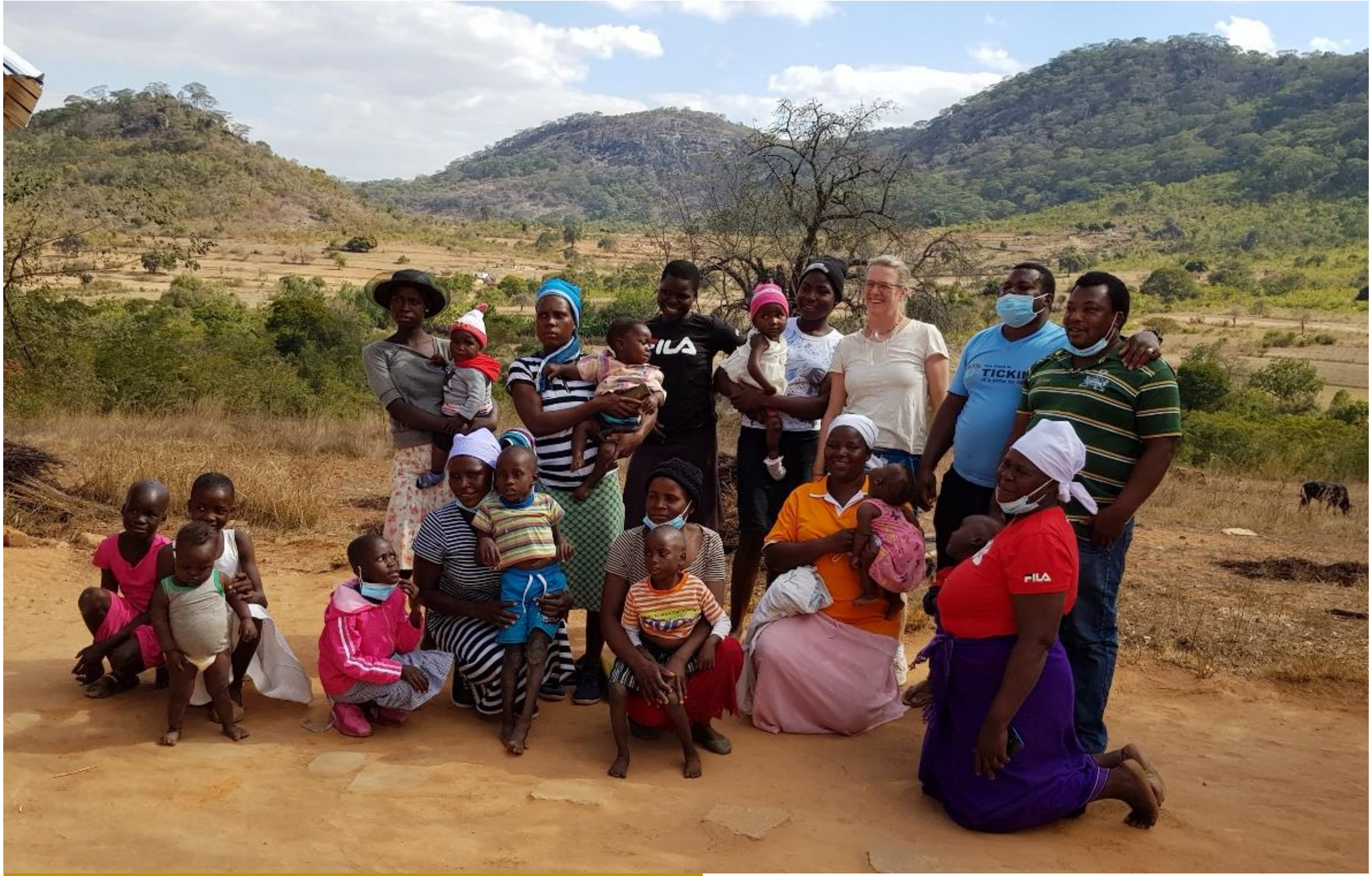
We thank you very kindly for your interest, also on behalf of the children and their parents. Perhaps you feel inclined, after reading this newsletter, to contribute to the work of the foundation? We heartily welcome all kinds of support, financially or otherwise

We are still looking for someone
for the function of **secretary**.

For further information, check our website or the site of tax administration
Your entire financial support shall be for the benefit of the project only.

Lastly, we would like to draw your attention to the action ‘Zimbabwe for Zimbabwe’. We have several sculptures in our possession, made by sculptor Percy Kuta from Tengenenge, the sculptors’ village of Zimbabwe par excellence. He makes abstract sculptures from a deep spiritual experience.
The proceeds of the sale of these sculptures will be donated to our project. This way we help both the sculptor and the children with their families of our project.
Are you interested? Please contact us via email info@kufambatose.eu
See attached price list.

With warm regards,
Board Kufambatose Foundation – Progressing together



Conclusion of a support group, living in the middle of the forest.