

Courageous Dreams in Zimbabwe

Florence Hibbeler

The peaceful coup d'etat of November 2017 astonished everyone - it seems like a miracle, but unfortunately, it still does not look like one in everyday life. The new government has brought new hope to the country - after big promises - but is already steering backwards, because of course, such a ruined economic situation can not be remedied in 100 days. The financial situation for the average person is even worse than last year - there is hardly any cash, either US dollars or "art money," the money in bank accounts is inaccessible, and completely inflated prices force consumers to limit their purchases - almost the only money in circulation is virtual money via mobile phone. Unemployment is massive, and on top of that there is a threatening drought in some countries in southern Africa, which does not bode well. What can be our source of strength and support, on what can we rely?

Since the personal situation of the people of Zimbabwe has not changed, our movement is still marked by courageous dreams and "just keep going, it's so important, the money will come", and the joy that we're really well-accompanied from "above" and by our supporters, the Friends of Waldorf Education, IASWECE, ACACIA and some generous friends and acquaintances.

What has happened in the past year?

Our one-year intensive seminar became an 18-month seminar, partly because the government forced Rusape, the kindergarten teacher, to spend every school vacation attending government training courses, and we had to postpone our seminars several times.

In addition, it has become clear: December holidays are not suitable for a one-week seminar: there is a lot of movement at end of school year - traveling to relatives in their home villages, planting fields, and weeding - and women will not come into a classroom. This pioneer training course ended with 26 (of initially 32) women taking the final exam on January 6, 2018, and on January 20th, this was celebrated with much prayer and singing, small performances and speeches the delivery of the certificates!



WECMZ - Waldorf Early Childhood Movement Zimbabwe. As before, there was a one-day refresher / introductory workshop in Tertial for all those interested and members of this loose Association, which has

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over 60 members. The organizers of the n.g.o.. Initiatives usually met with each other, with me, when I'm in the country, and more recently with the initiators / teachers of the school in Kufunda to coordinate cooperation in the country. Contacts were also made with Waldorf teachers from other African countries: two kindergarten teachers participated in the Pan African Steiner/Waldorf Conference in Johannesburg.



An educator from the Rusape area, Anna Marunda, started her Waldorf training in Nairobi almost five years ago and completed it some time ago. This year she had a visit from South Africa by Nomathemba Tindlini, her mentor for the practical degree. For two weeks Nomathemba accompanied Anna's work in the kindergarten in Rusape. Some things were stimulated and improved, and in the end Anna received a "passing" grade! Recently, she found a suitable house in Rusape City to set up a kindergarten with a training center, so that for the first time she would have the chance to earn an income from a few more affluent parents.

She has start-up capital for renovations and furnishings and the opening took place on February 5, 2018. Deeply impressed by the sources of Waldorf education, she has given her kindergarten a name that is tongue-shattering for the rural Shona population: Steiner kindergarten!

Gilbert Guvakuva is tirelessly "networking" to find land or buildings for his own school and a kindergarten for his wife, also engaged in Waldorf educator training, including visits to many kindergartens. He registered for Waldorf teacher training the new academic year in Stuttgart in September in order to complete the few courses he still needs to take, and hopes to receive his Waldorf teacher diploma in the summer of 2018.

Florence Hibbeler is an anthroposophical medical doctor and general practitioner from Germany, who for years has been supporting the development of Steiner/Waldorf education in Zimbabwe. A former goldsmith, she discovered Anthroposophy in the 1980's in the USA and then worked in development projects with Ute Cramer at Monte Azul in Brazil. In 1989, after many years in Brazil and Argentina, she became active again as a medical doctor, mostly in southern Africa, and in 2008 she returned to development work on a volunteer basis.