

# Together we are creating peace.



The Living Compassion Kantolomba Team



The women sang and danced in appreciation of every new roof in Kantolomba. Later as they walked from house to house in joyous celebration, other residents couldn't resist joining them.

Recently the women in Kantolomba who work with Living Compassion told us the stories of their lives in Kantolomba before they were “adopted” by Living Compassion (this is the way they describe it to themselves), and the change that has happened since becoming involved. It was wonderfully moving to watch these women speak from their hearts and to hear their gratitude.

More powerful even than the particulars of these women's stories was the glimpse their narrations gave us into the extreme poverty they and all those who live in Kantolomba have labored under for so long. Truly, it is a wonder that anyone has survived. Many have not, of course; those that have, like these women, all have found some hard way to scrape together enough money to keep starvation at bay. They may have brewed the illicit liquor that the compound is known for, gathered firewood from the bush, sold something beside the road, or just begged from their neighbors, but all of them have refused to give up. It was remarkable how many said, as their first statement after their age and name, that they were widows. Imagine what it must have been like for them, without help, while caring for six, seven, eight children, to struggle each day for the small bag of nchima that would keep them all alive. Imagine also how it must have felt for them to be seen by someone who cares and to have been given the means to end their hunger.

Beatrice told us that before she was employed her family did not often manage to eat more than once a day, and sometimes not even then. Now they can afford to eat three times a day. “It is a miracle for us!” she said. “It seems like it has come from God that you are helping us.”

After the others had finished, Beatrice shyly presented us with a letter, written in the most beautiful cursive by her husband, Duncan, who is a teacher at one of the local schools (Beatrice has no English). This letter perfectly captures the gratitude of the people here and the beauty of the work we are doing.



Beatrice and her baby

Representing both himself and his wife, Duncan wrote:

Dear Living Compassion around the world,

Greetings from Ndola, Zambia. It is with much gratitude of heart as a family to thank you a lot for the excellent work you have performed towards us in the family of seven. For providing to us the most needed needs that every family on our Zambian soil is struggling to achieve in the world of today.

Your coming to our community attaches great importance towards us. You come to restore our human dignity. Mankind without a shelter and food is none respected at all. That is how we were before you came to us. We were a lost people. But now history is changing in Kantolomba community.

In respect of you we would say that you are unbeatable where your true love, your true compassion, and your co-operation are concerned. Many of us have been rescued from the pit of shame and rejection. Our poor house structures have been well rehabilitated, plastered, and well roofed in our community. All these have been done alone by the Living Compassion project. We could not afford all these things on our own efforts.

Your project has purged away the ignorance that did exist for some, especially some of the brothers and sisters who lived in isolation, because of the traditional values and religions. Today we have been united as one without any hindrances of culture, tribe, and religious background. This has come because of Living Compassion. We have one tribe of love that works together to bring up one thing, that is development of our community. We are changing for the better every day. Even our small children are able to learn to write and read.



Beatrice and Duncan celebrating their new roof.

May you continue with the work you have started. You shall return one day to see the children you are supporting today reach the heights of prominence and also help others who are living in the vulnerable societies. All these are done through the power and support of Living Compassion Team of America.

Yours faithfully,  
Beatrice Kasenzi, and husband Duncan Muzala.

Gratitude was the theme of the day, and has been the theme of this whole trip, really: gratitude both to those in the States and elsewhere who so generously support the work in Kantolomba, and to each person in Kantolomba who works every day to turn that generosity into something that saves lives and returns dignity, as Duncan wrote, to the people.

It was difficult to leave the compound as the day came to an end and the light began to soften towards evening. Many who have come with us to Zambia have remarked that, while life in Kantolomba is as different as could be from anything they had ever known, they felt as much at home there as anywhere else on earth. There is something special about being in Kantolomba. In America, of course, most people have plenty of food to eat. Most have clothes, and good houses, and every other material thing they might need. Often, however, we do not have the peace we are looking for. This peace is what we receive from the work we do in Africa. All the people involved, black and white, here and across the ocean, are working together for a common good. A sort of magic comes from this that cannot really be described, but can be felt by everyone who sets foot on the property. Together we are creating peace.

Read more of the women's stories in our blog and much more about our work in Kantolomba on our website at [africa.livingcompassion.org](http://africa.livingcompassion.org).