

Mechanics for Chibobo #2

Where's your closest vehicle workshop -- No local repair



Most of us have any number of places where we can take our vehicles to be serviced – maybe to the local dealer or specialty workshops for electrics, tires, exhausts and so on. The community of Chibobo, the Orphanage and the nearby small town of Serenje are over 430 km northeast of Lusaka. The district has no trained mechanics or structured vehicle repair facility and it's a long and expensive drive to get the Orphanage vehicles serviced in Lusaka or Ndola, and an impossible distance for regular service of the farm tractor, generators, water pump or maize mill or to repair breakdowns

Shaky Wheels and Wobbly Cranks -- No basic culture in mechanical care

Where you taught to repair your bike as a kid? Most of us can at least repair a flat tyre, some may be able to clean the wheel bearings, grease and adjust them. The people in Chibobo haven't been shown any of these basics tasks, as there has been no formal vehicle maintenance or equipment repair program. The rough dirt roads, the dry and dusty conditions play havoc with engines, wheel bearings, linkages, the longevity of vehicles and equipment as a whole. This means a short life for all mechanical items donated from Australia or Europe & thereby wasted money.



What are we doing about it? -- Structured Training of local young men

After visiting Chibobo last year we took the step of asking the Chibobo manager Staivous Mulumba to choose two young men from the orphanage or the local area to sit the [*Mechanics for Africa*](#) (MFA) entrance exam at their school in Ndola central Zambia, about 320 Kms from Chibobo. After sitting the exam one of these young men, John Chilangwa was chosen to start the two-year vehicle mechanics course in January 2009. This course has British external examinations and international accreditation on successful completion.



What will this training cost?

The training fees, travel, food and accommodation are expected to be about \$3,500 per trainee. We contacted Kevin Gilbert a supporter of the ZOA Orphanage in Serenje & they will fund 50% of John's training. This is a major step in breaking the cycle of donor's funds going to replace prematurely worn out vehicles, create long-term work experience

& employment & be a long term cash generator for the Orphanages. This will allow future donations and funding from Overnewton College and St Mary's communities to be put to other Orphan care, Medical, & Pastoral outreach in the district. We will also have other young men sit the entrance examination at the end of the year for schooling in 2010.

The next step -- The provision of a vehicle workshop for Chibobo & Serenje



A party of four will be going to Zambia in July to meet with the [*Mechanics for Africa*](#) teachers and John Chilangwa at in Ndola, then will go to Chibobo & Serenje to meet with the HMP & ZOA orphanage boards to discuss the training of other young men at MFA and the planning of vehicle workshops in the area. These talks will be the foundations for our long-term goal to give true self-sufficiency for the Orphanages. A well-equipped workshop with the trained mechanics will provide a stable base to maintain equipment, help with local funds for the Orphanage and provide employment in the coming years as the young men reach working age.

Do you want to help this remote part of Zambia become more self-sufficient?