

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020



EBENEZER MATOBO

# Staff

## NOTE FROM THE TEAM

2020 is a year that will be remembered around the world for many reasons. This is true at Ebenezer Matobo too. We are grateful that we have been able to keep operating through the entire year. We did have to do our graduation with no parents or visitors and also adapt our selection process, but both were enjoyed and went well even under the different circumstances. It was fantastic to see that even though our graduates went to start businesses and look for jobs in the middle of lockdown, over 30 of them were employed or had started their own farming within 3 months of graduation. It was also wonderful to be able not just to keep operating but also keep improving and expanding. One of the most exciting developments has been the first apprentices arriving at Ebenezer Zambia in November 2020. It is wonderful to have this third Ebenezer centre opening in a new location at a time where it would not have seemed possible! Truly, we can say once again as we end 2020 – Ebenezer, thus far the Lord has helped us.



A highlight of 2020 for me was travelling to Masvingo for a preselection gathering. It was my first time to travel that far for work. I enjoyed the opportunity to share about my faith and the challenge of interpreting Ndebele and English into Shona.

### **LINET, Trainer**

One of the biggest things for me in 2020 was how apprentices blessed me. The apprentice-led worship on Family Nights and Sunday mornings was wonderful to be a part of, especially in a year when the world was confused and unsure what to do with coronavirus. It was wonderful to be part of the Ebenezer family of faith.

### **BRIERLY, Dairy Team Leader**

My highlight of 2020 was that I managed to push good sales through Ebenezer Stores even whilst there was a lockdown.

### **NOBUKHOSI, Stores Manager**

My 2020 highlight was the Holy Spirit Weekend as part of the Alpha Course. I really felt God doing something in apprentices' lives. In my discussions with them afterwards, everyone was pumped up and on fire for Jesus. It felt like everyone was refreshed so I really loved that.

### **TINO, Business Manager & Coach**



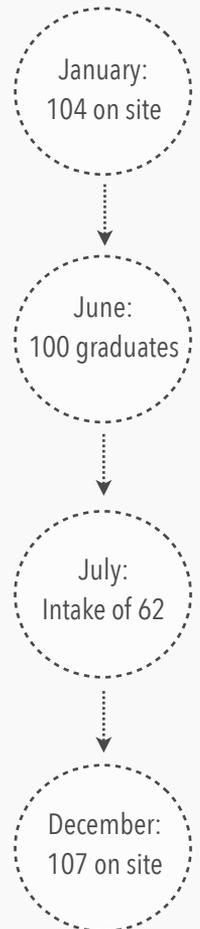
# Apprentices

We were very glad that when Zimbabwe went into Lockdown in March 2020, the majority of our apprentices chose to stay on site, seeking to serve God and their nation with their farming skills contributing to the national effort to keep food production going. We are grateful that throughout 2020 our apprentices have maintained good health and a positive attitude despite many of them going many months without seeing their families. It was wonderful in June to be able to graduate 100 apprentices, 46 from our Advanced Course and 54 from our Intermediate Course. We were sad not to be able to invite family members and the local community to celebrate with us, but we had a great time celebrating as the Ebenezer Family.

## INTRODUCING...



Witness Nkomo is an Advanced Course apprentice from Hwange. "I came to Ebenezer to gain agricultural knowledge and skills under a Christian environment. These two things are very important in my life. For 15 months I have been reading my Bible every day! Before I came to Ebenezer I would just read my Bible at church. When I leave Ebenezer, I will never be the same again."



# Ebenezer Africa

## LIVINGSTONE

Big news in 2020 for Ebenezer Africa was the launch of our first ever courses in Zambia with the arrival of 15 new apprentices to Ebenezer Livingstone! Following an initial selection process with applications coming via several community partnerships, 10 young men and 5 young women arrived on 30 November. Under the team leadership of Reouhidi Ndjerareou, the Ebenezer Livingstone staff and apprentices are farming 7 hectares of crop and 16 chicken houses with the capacity to house a total of 80,000 birds.



## NAMPULA

In 2020 Ebenezer Mozambique commissioned a new broiler house and our first commercial layer house. We also completed construction on a dam which will expand our agriculture capabilities in the coming years. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic meant formal classes were very disrupted with the resultant reduction in face-to-face contact with the apprentices, however we were able to have Bible studies in dorm groups even when classes were not permitted. We also benefited greatly from the arrival of a new Business Leader who has been putting our finances in shape and arranging some extra funding sources for the coming year.



2020 has been a year in which we have completed several building projects. Whilst construction was delayed, by the end of the year we had built two new staff houses and an ablutions block as well as completing the thatch on our Dining Hall. We also made good progress towards completing a third staff house and a new store to serve the community around Ebenezer.

We were also able to continue hosting a good number of external trainings between lockdowns. Working in partnership with Turning Matabeleland Green (TMG) and Africa Alive, approximately 350 farmers, both young and old, attended short training programmes hosted at Ebenezer and designed to unlock the potential of small-scale farmers across southern Africa.

A timely and positive development in 2020 was visits from DNA Health Care Solutions, an initiative which offers free or affordable health consultations. With COVID restrictions making it difficult for staff and apprentices to attend the local clinic, we were grateful for these visits where anyone on site could book a consultation with a doctor or nurse.

# News

# Training & Discipleship

A major achievement in our training this year was the completion of our formalised modular Agriculture curriculum. Based on 5 pillars of farming which can be applied to any farming discipline, and formatted as a largely pictorial resource, we are making our agricultural training as practical and accessible as possible.

We introduced a new Business challenge to our second year apprentices this year - the Triple i Challenge. Family groups were given 1000m of used drip tape and two trays of eggs to start and run their own businesses. The businesses they came up with were judged according to innovation, implementation and inspiration, and it was great to see some very creative ideas emerge!

We ran a new Family Night series in early 2020 entitled "Why Work?" where we explored the idea of work as worship. We had some excellent speakers come and share their own experience of work as worship and it led to some very interesting discussions on what constitutes work, what the purpose of work is, and which kinds of work our apprentices think carry the greatest importance!





There has been a lot of infrastructure development in our cropping section this year. In May we installed two greenhouses which have enabled us to grow tomatoes throughout the winter, as well as peppers and cucumbers. Another major development has been the installation of a centre pivot with the capacity to irrigate 12 hectares of crop. First operational in September, by the end of the year the centre pivot was being fully powered by solar.

There has also been some major staff team changes in 2020. At the end of the year we said good bye to our Cropping team leader, Washington Ngirazi, who had been with us since 2016 as well as to Prosper Ngulube, our longest serving Field Coach.

In 2020 we planted 17 hectares of butternut, from which harvested almost 160 tons. We harvested 436 tons of tomatoes from 10.5 hectares planted and nearly 20,000 watermelons from 9.5 hectares planted.

We also grew 12.5 hectares of dairy feed crops, including oats, sorghum and 3 hectares of maize which was made into silage. We are also continuing to experiment in our Demo Garden, adding a greater variety of fresh produce into our diet and demonstrating crops that could suit an Ebenezer graduate who finds themselves farming far from a market.

# Cropping

# Poultry



It has been another busy year in our poultry section with our layer birds producing a total of 4,929,833 eggs with an average lay-rate of 81%. We also grew 4 batches of broilers throughout the year adding up to 98,840kg of meat being delivered to market and with an average FCR of 1.9.

One of the main developments in our poultry section has been the installation of layer house 4 which is 136m long and has the capacity to house 18,000 birds! This new house doubles our onsite capacity and is our first layer house with the potential to be fully mechanised in feed delivery, egg collection and manure removal. We now have 4 layer houses ranging from small-scale (4000 birds) to this larger one; this means we are able to demonstrate multiple methods of layer bird management, giving our apprentices exposure to farming methods they could use at home or in a large-scale commercial setting.

For the first time in several years, we placed layer chicks at Ebenezer with 4300 birds arriving in April. They have been very successful and by the end of the year were hitting international lay-rate standards.

2020 has been the first year where we have employed a full-time Broiler Coach, with Felix Ngoma joining us in September. Having Felix focused entirely on Broilers brings a consistency to our apprentices' learning experience.



# Dairy

The dairy team's hard work during 2020 has seen production increase over the year, with a highlight being reaching an average production of 16 litres per cow per day. This is partly due to introducing more easily digestible feeds this year and from increasing collaboration between dairy and cropping, which has seen us producing more of our own dairy feed.

Not only has our milk production increased, but the quality of milk also continues to improve. In October 2020, our milk hit Grade A quality - the result of more easily digestible feeds, a change in design of our feeding troughs and, of course, from the impact of a great team working together!

Another development in our dairy this year was the placement of 300 SASSO chickens in a demonstration coop adjacent to the dairy. The chickens, which can be grown as broilers or layers, eat insects and worms that could otherwise bother our cows, and provide our kitchen with a steady supply of eggs and meat! As well as leaving the dairy cleaner for our cows, these SASSO birds serve as a demonstration to apprentices and visiting farmers of how these birds can be farmed at home.

In December 2020 two of our dairy team became qualified artificial insemination technicians. This means that by doing our own artificial insemination onsite, we are now able to keep bringing in new genetic lines cost-effectively.

# Graduates



We were amazed and delighted that despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, over 75% of our 2020 graduates found employment or partnerships in sustainable businesses. A nice development over the past few years has been pockets of Ebenezer graduates working together in different areas. One such area is Ntabazinduna, about 35 km from Bulawayo, where several graduates are employed as field officers working with out-grower chicken farmers.

One such graduate is Nkazimulo Dube who showed such aptitude in broiler farming at Ebenezer that he was guaranteed a job 5 months before he graduated! He says: "In my role as a field officer I am an ambassador for my company, visiting my chicken farmers every day, inspecting their birds, checking for diseases and planning for their feed requirements. I conduct trainings and meetings with my farmers and team leaders to improve and grow."

About his time at Ebenezer, Nkazimulo says, "The learning of business practically has helped me understand and make easier the work I do today. Hearing more about Christ and the good news has changed a lot of doubts in me and equipped me more to live in possibilities. My time at Ebenezer also gave me the chance to do work that I enjoy and to improve and grow. One day I hope to stand before Christ and say I used all the gifts you gave me!"

Nkazimulo is now in his third year as a field officer and is a wonderful example to our current apprentices of what is possible beyond Ebenezer. We love his advice to our apprentices: "Know what you want, push your goal and shine in that area. Leave no stone unturned and do your best. I did it, you can too!!"

# Looking Ahead



As we continue to grow in all areas at Ebenezer, we have many plans and hopes for the year ahead. In terms of our cropping, we would like to see the installation of our solar pumping system completed in 2021. With the centre pivot irrigation already running on solar, we are keen to complete the infrastructure to have our entire irrigation system running on solar. This will save us approximately 3000 litres of diesel per month!

We also plan to grow our dairy herd. As we do this we hope to install more chillers and the necessary machinery to increase the amount of feed we are able to produce on site.

With our modular Agriculture Curriculum completed in 2020, we are now focusing on standardising our Business Curriculum in a similar way. As we do so we are also looking at how we can further deepen the relationship between training happening in our Productive Learning Areas and in our classrooms, so that every training opportunity is maximised for our apprentices, whether they are in a field, a chicken house or a classroom.

Having already started to use tablets in some of our training, another focus of 2021 is to further explore how we can incorporate more IT skills and relevant technology into what we do and how we train.



**CONTACT US:**

[www.ebenezerafrica.org](http://www.ebenezerafrica.org)

[ebenezeratc@gmail.com](mailto:ebenezeratc@gmail.com)