

# Ubunthu News

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## Breaking news

On May 08, 2026 Ubunthu Enablers officially launched its Climate Smart Agriculture / Farming as a Business Project in Choma District. (more details of the project under “Our projects”)

During the launch Choma District Commissioner Mr Mabele applauded Ubunthu Enablers for such an initiative. He emphasized the importance of investing in young people and promoting Climate Smart Agriculture as key drivers of Zambia’s agricultural transformation.

Speaking at the event, the District Commissioner expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Education, through the Choma District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) Office, for its continued support and collaboration in implementing the program. He noted that the partnership demonstrates a shared commitment to

equipping learners and communities with practical skills in conservation farming, efficient water use, soil management and climate-resilient farming practices.

In his remarks, the District Commissioner highlighted the growing impact of climate change on Zambia’s agricultural sector, particularly in Southern Province, where agriculture remains the main source of livelihood for many households. He pointed out that unpredictable rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and declining soil fertility continue to threaten food security and productivity among smallholder farmers who largely depend on rain-fed agriculture, and stressed, that Climate Smart Agriculture is no longer optional, but a necessity.



**Chairing the Launch Event; from left to right: Country Director Chippoh Mweemba, Choma District Commissioner Mr Funds Mabele, DEBS Secretary Mr Denis Hameja**

The District Commissioner further encouraged a shift from subsistence farming to farming as a business, stating that agri-

culture should be approached as an enterprise that requires planning, investment, record-keeping, and an understanding of markets and value chains. “Agriculture, when done correctly, is not just about survival, it is about prosperity,” he said.

He also described the program’s focus on schools and young people as a strategic investment in the future of Zambia’s agriculture sector. By aligning the initiative with the Competence-Based Curriculum, learners will gain hands-on experience, entrepreneurial knowledge, and critical thinking skills necessary for long-term success.



**Participants of the Launch Event**

The District Commissioner commended Ubuntu Enablers for spearheading the initiative and acknowledged the role being played by traditional leadership, schools, seed and chemical suppliers, NGOs and development partners in supporting the program.

He concluded by reaffirming that strong public-private partnerships are essential in building resilient communities and securing the future of sustainable agriculture in Zambia.

## **What’s going on**

In April Ubuntu Enablers had the honor of paying a courtesy call on His Royal Highness Chief Mapanza the 7th in Cho-

ma District. The visit was part of the preparations for the launch of Ubuntu’s Climate Smart Agriculture / Farming as a Business Project initiative. The engagement provided an opportunity to formally introduce the project, which will be implemented in two schools within the chiefdom.

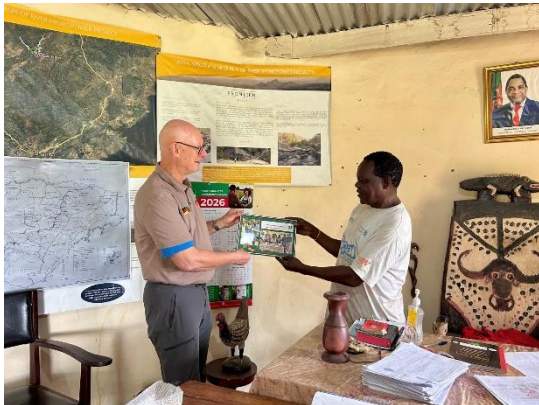


**From left to right: Chippoh Mweemba, HRH Chief Mapanza the 7 th, Brenda Michelo, Alice Kalenga**

His Royal Highness expressed sincere appreciation for selecting his chiefdom for this important intervention, particularly commending the project’s focus on youth, who are often more open to innovation and change. He further emphasized that while promoting farming as a business is critical, it must go hand in hand with practical solutions that address the adverse effects of climate change, which continue to affect local communities. The Chief reaffirmed his full support for the project and assured the team that the doors of the palace remain open for collaboration and guidance throughout implementation.

Since its founding five years ago, Ubuntu Enablers has been working successfully with His Royal Highness Chief Cooma. While CEO Manfred Klepacz was staying in Zambia in February the Ubuntu team paid a courtesy call to the Chief. To appreciate the constructive collaboration Manfred presented him with a small memento. Afterwards the team was shown

around his new palace, even though it had not yet been officially inaugurated.



**CEO Manfred Klepacz and His Royal Highness Chief Cooma**



**The new palace of His Royal Highness Chief Cooma**

Having visited the Chief, the team also went to see Jonsen Habashimba on his farm, which is located close by. The orange plantation is thriving and a great example of a successful start-up. Supporting Jonsen to establish the plantation



**Jonsen Habashimba's orange plantation - the beginnings**

marked the beginning of Manfred's activities in Zambia, which later led to the foundation of Ubinthu Enablers.



**Jonsen Habashimba in his orange plantation today**

## **Our projects**

### **Climate Smart Agriculture / Farming as a Business Project**

In rural communities across Choma District, agriculture remains the backbone of household economies, sustaining livelihoods and supporting food security. However, increasing climate variability has continued to challenge traditional farming practices, negatively affecting crop yields and household incomes.

In response to these challenges, Ubinthu Enablers is scaling up a Climate Smart Agriculture Project. School gardens will be an essential element to equip and train young people with practical, adaptive farming skills that can transform agricultural productivity in their communities.

Under the leadership of Ubinthu Enablers a public-private partnership with the Ministry of Education Zambia, Agriculture Knowledge and Training Center (AKTC) (a cooperation project between the German

and Zambian Ministries of Agriculture) and local agro companies was formed. The project is deliberately focusing on youth.

A Memorandum of Understanding with the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) in Choma has been signed, formalizing the collaboration and reinforcing shared commitment to improve education outcomes and community resilience through agriculture.



**From left to right: DEBS Secretary Mr Denis Hameja, Brenda Michelo, Manfred Klepacz, Letisha Mbewe, Education Standard Officer/ Special Education Mr Simatama Simatama**

By targeting learners who are often more open to innovation and new ideas, the initiative is cultivating a generation of young farmers equipped to embrace modern, climate-resilient agricultural practices. Central to this approach is crop diversification, which enables schools and surrounding communities to reduce risk, improve soil health, and enhance overall productivity despite changing climatic conditions.

Capacity building remains a cornerstone of the project, with ‘Training of Trainers’ sessions and Lead Teacher trainings being conducted in collaboration with AKTC. These trainings will equip educators with the knowledge and skills required to effectively supervise and sustain school garden activities. Teachers overseeing the gardens will be guided on best agronomic practices.

As the Climate Smart Agriculture Project transitions into its planting and expansion phase, it stands as a powerful model for integrating education and agriculture under Zambia’s Competence-Based Curriculum. More importantly, it offers a practical and scalable solution to the challenges faced by rural farming communities, empowering young people with the skills and knowledge needed to improve crop yields, strengthen food security, and build resilient livelihoods in Choma District.



**Visiting the schools in remote places poses quite a challenge to the Ubumthu Enablers team**

The pilot phase encompasses five schools and is planned to run for 18 months. Phase II will see rollout to additional schools in the region and teachers taking a larger role in training the next group of teachers.

## **Creating income opportunities in rural communities**

### **Kazungula Project**

In 2022 Ubumthu Enablers launched the project in Kazungula to support 15 cooperatives with about 300 women. After intensive training over a six-month period in self-help, basic veterinary, farming as a business and basic financial skills each coop received eleven goats. Participating women benefitted from the milk, and from the manure, which was used as fertilizer for their gardens.

Ubunthu Enablers former initiative to sell goats on behalf of the beneficiaries was hampered by an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. Although the disease is under control today, markets remain unsettled. Ubunthu Enablers intends to make another effort to start selling the goats within the next few months, thus achieving the ultimate project target of providing income to the participating women.

During the initial stage one borehole had been successfully drilled to give communities better access to water. A second borehole for a different group of cooperatives was planned. Unfortunately, due to unfavorable soil conditions, this attempt failed. Without sufficient funds Ubunthu Enablers could not afford a second borehole in a different location.

However, recently the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has begun drilling boreholes in Kazungula District under its own supervision. Appreciating Ubunthu Enablers work in the district, JICA offered to collaborate with Ubunthu Enablers and agreed to bring down another two boreholes and install solar-powered water supply systems for the cooperatives.

This significant development, which came just at the right time, marks a transformative step towards addressing water scarcity in the district.

The introduction of solar-powered systems is particularly impactful in addressing seasonal water shortages, which have long placed immense strain on communities. During peak dry periods, women, who are the primary custodians of both household water needs and livestock care, have had to walk long distances in search of water.

The availability of reliable water sources within closer proximity represents a profound shift. It not only eases the physical burden on women but also improves the



**Mr Tanaka (First Secretary at the Japanese Embassy) and Ms Rice Tanino (National Coordinator for the Grassroot Project) on behalf of JICA inspecting the water pump in Kazungula District, which will be upgraded into the first mechanized solar-powered water pump**

overall viability of livestock rearing, ensuring that goats remain healthy and productive even during challenging climatic conditions.

### **Creating income opportunities in rural communities**

### **Empowerment Project in Cooma Chiefdom**

In 2025 Ubunthu Enablers launched a similar project in Cooma Chiefdom. 10 cooperatives with about 150 women and men from rural communities underwent extensive training and received their goats in October last year.

Following the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the country, Ubunthu Enablers

facilitated a preventive animal health intervention, in which all goats were vaccinated and dewormed. This proactive measure was specifically undertaken to protect the herd from potential disease and other health risks that could result in significant losses.

In March Ubuntu Enablers conducted a comprehensive goat tagging exercise at the designated livestock holding area of Mili-mo Cooperative in Popota, Cooma Chiefdom. This initiative aimed to enhance traceability through the assignment of unique identification tags to each animal, thereby improving record-keeping, monitoring, and overall herd management. The activity was carried out in close collaboration with cooperative members, whose active participation ensured its smooth and successful implementation.



**Ubuntu Enablers team on the way visiting the cooperatives; Brenda Michelo in front, Alice Kalenga behind**

Beyond improved tracking systems, the cooperative has recorded encouraging progress in herd productivity. Members expressed enthusiasm following the identification of several pregnant goats, with new kids already being added to the flock. This development signals positive growth and sustainability of the livestock enterprise, reinforcing the cooperative's com-

mitment to improved breeding and management practices.



**The women giving a warm welcome to the Ubuntu Enablers team; in front from left to right: Letisha Mbewe, Brenda Michelo, Alice Kalenga**



**Alice Kalenga, Chippoh Mweemba and Letisha Mbewe tagging the goats**

Thanks to the initial training, partners immediately informed Ubuntu Enablers about a recent outbreak of black-leg disease in the region. Ubuntu Enablers then discussed with the local veterinary officer potential protective measures and advised all coops to constrain animals to the goat houses to avoid infection.

The Ubuntu approach for intensive training ahead of project start as well as regular communication with project partners showed that a major project setback could be prevented!

## **Twayanda Innovation Shoe-Making Project**

Mr Muleya Mutanda, a self-trained shoemaker, participated at Ubumthu Enablers first Start-Up Symposium in Choma in July 2025. Ubumthu Enablers connected Mr Muleya with Rocky Katongo (*Beddah and Rocky Katongo Leather Trading*), a professional shoemaker from Lusaka, who has been working closely with Ubumthu Enablers. Both agreed to cooperate closely and decided that the electric shoe-sewing machine, which was financed by Ubumthu Enablers, was moved from Lusaka to Choma, where Rocky advised Muleya of the use of the machine and how to improve product quality.



**Muleya Mutanda working at the electric shoe-sewing machine**

Mr Muleya greatly appreciates the electric machine as the new equipment already allowed him to increase production from 5 pairs of shoes per day up to 20 pairs of shoes per day. He also states that customers frequently complement him of the much improved quality of his shoes.

Plans are currently underway for Rocky to relocate to Choma, a move that will further strengthen the partnership and support the continued growth of the business.

During the symposium Mr Muleya had also realized the importance of financial accounting. Subsequently he has hired an accountant. Ubumthu Enablers supports in

setting up an adequate accounting system to allow financial control of activities and therefore sustainability of the business.



**Muleya Mutanda showing his ladies slippers to Brenda Michelo**

## **Drovers Livestock Business**

Ms Mutinta Kabeleka, founder of *Drovers Livestock Business*, intends to locally manufacture affordable products needed by small hold livestock farmers in the region. She is investing the price money won for the best pitch at the Ubumthu Enablers Start-Up Symposium in July last year into raw materials to expand production. In parallel Ubumthu Enablers is working with her to develop a budget, cash flow and finance plan as a basis for future growth.

Ubumthu Enablers mentors Ms Mutinta to become ready to approach local investors to scale up manufacturing quickly.

## **Unique Glassware**

Working as a trained nurse on night shifts, Ms Majorie had also pitched at last year's Start-Up Symposium. With the help of several women, who collect discarded glass bottles, and two assistants she recycles these bottles and transforms them into all kinds of decorative glassware, beautifully done to order. Her craftsmanship and artistic skills are top-notch.



**Ms Majorie's inventory of discarded glass bottles**



**...transformed into decorative glassware (last years Christmas Edition)**

Ms Majorie already shows in depth knowledge of manufacturing costs and financials. In order to help her access a much larger customer group, Ubuntu Enablers is supporting her setting up a sales platform on TikTok and discussing pricing strategies.

## Useful information

Ubunthu Enablers Ltd (Ubunthu) is a private not for profit organization. It was founded in January 2022 by a group of Zambian and German entrepreneurs. Ubunthu's vision is to support progress in Zambia.

Ubunthu pursues the following key objectives:

- Poverty reduction through a well-researched, evidence-based and people-centered economic development approach that guarantees productivity, sustainability and dignity.
- Strengthen the capacity of local communities to withstand social, economic and climatic emergencies through economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood responses.
- The company will support entrepreneurs of start-up businesses as well as small and medium-sized enterprises to enable entities to grow and increase employment opportunities, thus creating stable income for families.

For more information please see Ubunthu website [www.ubunthu.org.zm](http://www.ubunthu.org.zm).

You can also use the QR-code for quick reference.



To support our activities in Zambia we very much welcome donations and appreciate every single one.

If you would like to make a donation please contact

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Please share this newsletter with others to let more people get to know about Ubunthu.

## Imprint

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