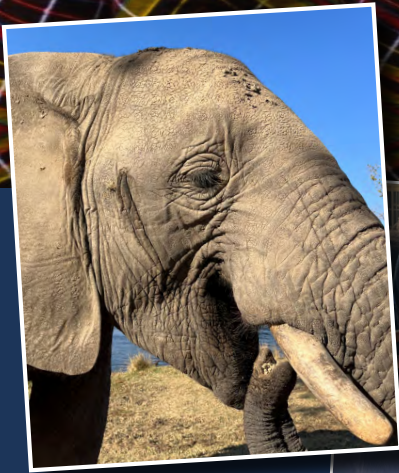


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IPDS Zambia | May/June 2023



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STORIES. GRATITUDE. SONG

Everything from this experience had an impact on me but especially our visit with the mothers and grandmothers at Chikumbuso, a women and orphans project. I was struck by how much these women had endured and their willingness to share their stories. They greeted us singing, welcomed us to see their safe haven for girls, and taught us to create the bags and jewelry they sell, weaving plastic bags into art. They allowed us work alongside them to serve food and play games with the children. We were able to donate some items and they sang their gratitude and invited us to dance, leaving not one dry eye in our group. I left Chikumbuso wanting to do better at not taking things for granted, at realizing how much I can do with what I have, and determined to communicate to others how much I appreciate them.

EVERY PLACE YOU VISIT, EVERY PERSON YOU MEET...THERE IS A STORY TO BE SHARED. I WANT TO HEAR AND BE TOUCHED BY THOSE STORIES, AND I WANT TO LEARN MORE.

SERIOUS ABOUT EDUCATION

In the U.S., perhaps because it is so accessible, many take school for granted. This trip put into perspective how valuable education is and the amazing things that can be done with limited resources. In Zambia, some of the classes we visited at Libala Primary had 80-100 students and one teacher. From early childhood to 4th grade the students are taught in their local language, then from 5th grade up they are taught in English. The lessons were in-depth and every single student was participating. The libraries were full of students, completely focused on their reading or computer work. I want my classroom to be like the ones I visited, where every student feels safe and wants to be present and to learn.

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