

Home Owner Story for Faileti Balya (Violet Bwalya)

NRC Number 122952/44/1

House Number KC 360

Family Background

COMMUNITY FACTS

Chipulukusu Township is one of the oldest squatter settlements in Zambia being established in 1968. It has a population of 32, 066 with about 6, 671 households. According to a baseline of Squatter Settlements in the city of Ndola conducted by Ndola City Council in 2009, almost quarter of the population in the township have never been to school.

Overall, a total of 71.7% adult residents are unemployed and looking for work. Of the 11.1% in formal employment, the majority offer unskilled and semi-skilled services as clerks, messengers, security guards, mechanics, brick layers, plumbers and carpenters in the industrial area, central business district and surrounding medium high income residential areas. The remaining 17.2% are engaged in self-employed informal income generating activities such as metal fabrication, carpentry, gardening and roadside open stalls selling groceries and foodstuffs. Due to high poverty levels, access to food is limited.

The survey also revealed that less than 10% have individual household piped water connections. However, while almost a third of the households draw water from shallow wells, others buy water from vendors or a few communal water kiosks installed by the water utility company. Due to the high cost of water, water purchased from kiosks is often reserved for drinking and cooking only.

Sanitation is grossly inadequate in all the settlements. The majority population uses traditional pit latrine either house owned or shared and are generally in a very deplorable and dangerous condition. Most of the pit latrines have no covers for the pit openings. This coupled with the fact they are not regularly cleaned and emptied leads to unsanitary conditions which worsen during the season particularly in an event of floods.

Storm water drainage is generally lacking or poor. Household waste water and storm water is therefore disposed of on paths outside dwelling units leading to pools of dirty stagnant water all around the settlement. During the rainy season, water collects in the low lying terrain and in shallow pit latrines thereby heightening health risks. The township rarely experiences floods.

Access to these areas is generally through informally interlinked footpaths which serve as main routes. Access into the interior of the township is in most cases almost impossible. The poor roads imply that ambulances and fire tenders cannot access the victims in emergency situations.

Over half (56%) of households indiscriminately dispose of their wastes, 6% use inadequate composting methods while almost one-third use open air burning to dispose of wastes. Most of the houses have mud floors and walls with poor temperature regulation properties. This had adverse effects on the health of the inhabitants. 94.9% of the households comprise an average of five people in one room. The overcrowding and high density at dwelling level implies that inhabitants have little privacy and are at very high risk of contracting airborne diseases especially tuberculosis.

While 62% of the housing units are owner occupied, the fact that over one-third (35%) pay rent to a case of a functioning property market. The population access free medical facilities from Chipulukusu clinic just within the community or Ndola Central Hospital in the City Centre. Common sicknesses include Malaria and coughs.

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Violet Bwalya came to Chipulukusu township more than 10 years ago. She was born in 1944 and has never been to school. She lives with her three grandchildren; Matthews 12, Charles 14 and Catherine 9 who are single orphans (they lost their father).

Violet first got married to Ackim Chipulu in 1962 and had a child Abraham Chipulu in 1964 who passed away years later. She later re-married to Lackson Mwape whom she had four children with; Agnes Mwape, born in 1968, Elizabeth Mwape born in 1971, Edwin Mwape born in 1977 and Mary Mwape born in 1981. Two of her children have

since died (Abraham and Edwin). According to her, she came to Ndola in 1974 with her second husband in search of a better life. “My husband used to work in town as a tailor until the time of his death in 2000,” Violet adds.

EDUCATION

Violet has never been to school and can neither read nor write. Despite her lack of education, she has made sure that her grandchildren are in school.

1. Matthews Ngosa aged 12 years is in Grade 4 at Grace Christian Community School in Chipulukusu.
2. Charles Ngosa aged 14 years is in Grade 4 at Grace Christian Community School in Chipulukusu.
3. Catherine Ngosa aged 9 years is in Grade 2 at Young Nak Christian School also in Chipulukusu.

FAMILY INCOME

Violet is not in any gainful employment and only manages to support her family from the money that her two younger children send her from time to time.

“I do not have a stable source of income. My two daughters are not consistent in sending the money and it is usually insufficient to meet all the basic needs of the family. When I receive the money, my first priority is to buy food for my grandchildren”, she narrates.

Previously, Violet used to buy and sell vegetables at the local market but stopped because she could no longer afford to purchase the vegetables caused by high purchasing prices.

“I cannot even recall how much profit I used to make as I would use the money immediately I earned it on food and other household necessities”, Violet reveals.

NUTRITION

The family manages to have one to two meals daily depending on the availability of Food. Meals consist mainly of vegetables and nshima (thick porridge).

“Whatever kind of food I can afford to buy at that particular time is what we eat”, Violet elaborates. The meals are cooked outside using charcoal on a brazier and sometimes firewood collected from a nearby bush.

HOUSE STRUCTURE

The family lives in a two-roomed structure that was built many years ago on a piece of land she bought in 2011. The walls have since developed cracks. It has no flooring and has poor ventilation.

The roofing is in a deplorable state and according to the grandchildren it leaks heavily especially in the bedroom when it rains. The roofing sheets are held down using stones and sections of the roof are partly covered with plastic materials. The door is unstable and the structure has small openings that act as windows.

HEALTH

The family visits Chipulukusu clinic for free medical services. The common illnesses that the children suffer from are common colds and diarrhoea.

WATER AND SANITATION

“We fetch our drinking water from a communal tap within the community at no cost. For domestic use, we draw the water from a neighbour’s shallow well”, she explains.

The family does not have a latrine and uses their neighbours’. The toilet provides limited privacy and safety, as it is an enclosure made from plastic sack. The family, especially Violet have to wait for evening time to use it.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Violet is affiliated to Samaritan Strategy, a community-based organisation working actively to support the vulnerable. The family congregates at the New Apostolic church represented in Chipulukusu community.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The house is not highly secure and decent for the family despite providing shelter.



Faileti standing in front of the wash area



Roofing sheets from the inside view.



Failleti in front of her house



Faileti preparing a meal for her grandchildren