

**"Our gods never  
helped us again..."**



The Tonga people describe resettlement  
and its aftermath

**ORAL TESTIMONY**

# **“Our gods never helped us again ...”**

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resettlement and its aftermath



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This booklet was compiled and written by Elisabeth Thomson, then curator of the BaTonga Museum, Binga, Zimbabwe, and Olivia Bennett of the Panos Oral Testimony Programme (OTP), with help from Mercy Khozi, Duncan Millar and Siobhan Warrington. David Mainza produced the Ci-Tonga version. Editing was undertaken by Sebastian Mainza, who edited the Ci-Tonga version, and Prof. Fackson Banda, Simon Mulumbi and Maambo Malawo of Panos Southern Africa who efficiently edited the final copy, coordinated Ci-Tonga translations and supervised the printing process. The project was funded primarily by the Department for International Development, UK, with additional support from NORAD and Sida.

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This booklet is dedicated to the memory of Mr David Mainza who passed away in April 2005.

Mr Mainza collected many of the Zambian interviews presented in this booklet. He was a sensitive and thoughtful interviewer who collected detailed and in-depth interviews from both men and women. Mr Mainza was also responsible for producing the Ci-Tonga translation presented here.

## PREFACE

From 1957 to 1958, some 57,000 Tonga people in the Zambezi Valley were resettled, as the rising waters of the Kariba Dam flooded their villages. For many, the move marked a dramatic change in their quality of life, and the memories remain vivid.

This booklet contains extracts from 46 interviews which were gathered between 2000 and 2002, from Tonga areas on both sides of the river. The project was designed not just to give a voice to Tonga men and women, but to train Tonga interviewers, so that they also framed the questions. The result is a moving collection of personal views and experiences. Older people recall the process of resettlement and its effects on their communities, lifestyles and traditions. Zambian and Zimbabwean Tonga, of different ages, describe the challenges they face today. They reflect upon how far these are due to the upheaval of relocation, and how much also to the influence of other cultures and beliefs, notably Christianity, and to wider economic and social forces.

Giving up fertile land on the river banks has had major repercussions. *"If fields could be carried,"* said one narrator, *"we would have carried them."* Others speak of the deep sense of loss they felt at leaving behind the shrines and graves of their ancestors. Yet despite the anger and disappointment in these accounts, they are also full of ideas for moving forward, and of positive hopes for the future. The Tonga want to tell their stories, and they wish others to understand what they have been through. They know all too well how complex the impact of resettlement is on families and communities, on their culture and their resources. Their experiences can contribute to greater awareness and understanding of the many different ways the resettled have to change and adapt to new environments.

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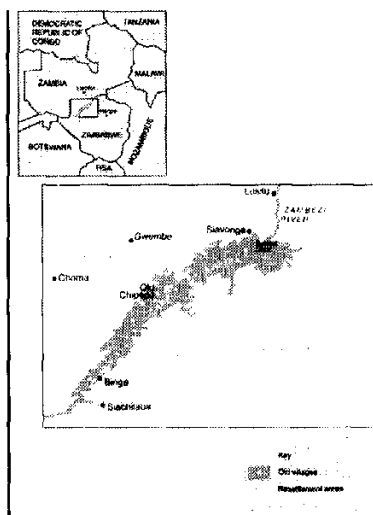
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# INTRODUCTION

For centuries Tonga people lived in relative isolation along the Zambezi River, where escarpments nearly 2000 feet high were effective barriers between the Zambezi Valley and the outside world. By the mid 1950s the governments of what were then Northern and Southern Rhodesia, now Zambia and Zimbabwe, decided to use the flowing waters of the Zambezi River to create a hydroelectric power plant, which would supply electricity to both countries. The resulting Lake Kariba was the largest manmade lake of its time, covering an area 120 miles long and 30-40 miles wide. Altogether 57,000 Tonga people were resettled from 1957 to 1958, as the rising waters flooded their villages in the Zambezi Valley. For many, the move marked a dramatic change in their quality of life.

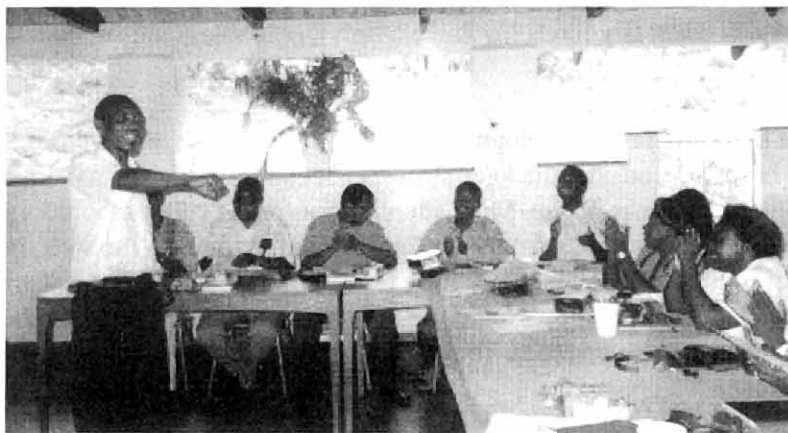
**Map of Kariba**



This booklet contains extracts from 46 interviews which were gathered between 2000 and 2002 by Tonga people from Tonga areas on both sides of the river. Older people recall the process of resettlement and its effects on their communities, lifestyles and traditions. Zambian and Zimbabwean Tonga, of different ages, express the concerns and challenges they face today and reflect upon how far these are due to the upheaval of relocation, and how much also to the influence of other cultures and beliefs, notably Christianity, and wider economic and social forces.

As many narrators say, the resettlement of the Tonga away from their fertile river valley homes to make way for the Kariba Dam “*underpins the development*” of both countries, yet it is rarely taught about in Zambian or Zimbabwean schools. People “*do not know who sacrificed what and how much in order for the Dam to be built*”, points out Jairo. For many Tonga, this neglect makes their struggle against poverty and food insecurity today even more painful. This booklet is the result of a project intended to meet some of this need for information. The aim was also to increase awareness and understanding about the complex impacts of resettlement on communities generally. It was designed not just to give a voice to Tonga men and women, but to train Tonga interviewers, so that they also asked the questions.

The project was developed by the Panos Institute’s Oral Testimony Programme (OTP), which ran a training workshop in Binga, Zimbabwe, for Tonga interviewers from both Zambia and Zimbabwe. The London-based OTP worked in partnership with Panos Southern Africa in Zambia, and the Kunzwana Trust and the Batonga Museum in Zimbabwe. Interviewers tape-recorded their interviews and transcribed them word for word in CiTonga. They were then translated into English. The patience and hard work of these interviewers, who often travelled long distances to find their narrators, is to be congratulated. But we, the project partners, owe the greatest thanks to the narrators, who were prepared to take the time to share their thoughts and stories. For a full list of the narrators see page 62.



**The oral testimony training workshop at Binga, Zimbabwe, November 1999**

## Many stories; many voices

Although most narrators bear witness to a deterioration in living conditions and an erosion of cultural identity, their experiences of resettlement and its aftermath are not uniform. The interviews and the extracts which appear in this book do identify common concerns, but they also serve to highlight how people's responses may vary, depending on their past experience, the location to where they moved, and the skills, strengths and resources upon which they could draw.

Some Tonga narrators recall resettlement as a traumatic experience when they were forcefully moved from their homes and insufficiently compensated. Others recall it more positively, saying they were well informed and adequately compensated. One points out that, in her area at least, *"... the population was growing so there was going to be a shortage of land along the Zambezi River... In the new area there are [also] many schools and roads that have been built which would not have been built in the Zambezi [Valley]."* (Jingamulonga) But most express a sense that any advantages of resettlement are outweighed by the cost, especially the loss of fertile land: *"We did not fight to remain because we saw that it was useless and we were the losers in that fight...we carried everything we had with us. If fields could be carried we would have carried them with us to these new places because of their fertility..."* (Chibbinya)

At the time of resettlement, the authorities compensated the Tonga with food handouts, monetary funds (in Zambia only), boreholes, and small dam and fishing projects.

True to the dominant development ideology of the 1950s, the authorities did not, however, consider the long-term social, cultural and spiritual effects of resettlement on the Tonga. More attention was paid by the authorities to the rescue of wild animals from the Zambezi Valley than to the welfare and development of the resettled Tonga. Even today one finds in Kariba a monument to Operation Noah, the rescue operation for wildlife, but no monument to the resettled Tonga. The story of their relocation remains neglected.

Social ties were strong between the Tonga before resettlement. At some points the Zambezi River was so narrow that *"if we saw a crocodile trying*

to catch someone bathing on the other side of the river, it was possible to shout a warning to that person". Many narrators recall how people used to cross to the opposite river bank to visit relations and carry out religious ceremonies. These relationships were severely disrupted by resettlement and further distorted when the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland broke up in 1963. Several narrators say that they lost contact with relatives on the other side of Lake Kariba. On a positive note, new laws in the 1990s have made it easier for the Tonga to cross the water and several talk about how they have begun to resume visits and relationships.

The Tonga identified strongly with the Zambezi River, calling themselves *Bazilwizi*, "**the River People**". They had rain shrines all along the river where they carried out ceremonies, *malende* or *mpande*, to ensure sufficient rain and good harvests. Some narrators describe how the shrines were submerged in the waters of the Lake because "*there was no way the shrines and shrine spirits could be carried with us*". Most say this led to a decline in rainmaking ceremonies, thus accounting for the poor rainfall in the new locations. Others, however, say that rainmaking continued in their areas, but not like before: "*Those possessed with rain spirits continued practising and new rain shrines were erected... This way, though in a dispirited manner, we continued to hold our rainmaking ceremonies.*" (John)

Tonga traditions such as girls' initiation ceremonies, youth games, marriage arrangements and funeral rites are also described by the narrators. Most say these are in decline, with some arguing that many traditions will soon be lost: "*When we die, this dance will finish ... It will be the end of Tongaship.*" Other narrators are more positive and argue that some, such as the *budima* funeral ceremony, will prevail: "*The budima...has a future. It is a symbol of the tribe or an identity. The budima in this village almost died but it is now on its way to full recovery.... It is us elders who...teach [the] grown and young people [who] very much want to learn.*" (Siabalombe)

Some narrators argue that the changes in Tonga culture and religious practice are primarily caused by resettlement; others believe that the influences of Christianity, modernisation and other more dominant cultures are equally responsible, and in some cases more so. "*The resettlement was not the cause of all cultural changes - although it largely contributed to the changes... the relocation process made us mixed and stay with the Ndebele and Shona*

*speakers and this somehow contributed to the changes found in our culture. Changes are also due to modernisation and globalisation, westernisation of African cultures....”* (Chief Siachilaba)

One woman views the exposure to other cultures brought by resettlement as a good thing - *“Another positive change is that the Tonga have mixed with other ethnic groups and have learnt a lot of things”* – but many more narrators feel this *“mixing”* has diminished Tonga culture. Gideon says: *“The resettlement exercise was very bad. Most of our children are no longer obedient because of copying other languages and tribes of other people.”* A common fear is that their language, CiTonga, will disappear because of the influence of other cultures. This is especially so in Zimbabwe, where CiTonga is only taught up to grade 5 in schools: *“The way the Zimbabwean Tonga are treated is very humiliating as the government despises them. They are considered as one of the backward people. What is painful is that we are like that because of the relocation.”* (Chibbinya)

### **Loss of natural resources**

Given all this, it is perhaps hardly surprising that many Tonga view life before resettlement with great nostalgia: *“life was very good in the valley when I was growing up. We had more than enough food”* is a recurring sentiment. They contrast this with their life post-resettlement, without the natural resources of their fertile riverine gardens, or the abundant game and fishing areas. Most narrators describe the difficulties they now face: poor soils, low and erratic rainfall, and wild animals destroying crops. They are greatly troubled by the lack of food security and they feel that the authorities today do not adequately assist them in resolving these difficulties. One painful irony is that the Tonga have benefited so little from the water and electricity supplies generated by the Kariba Dam. Few Tonga, except those in urban locations, have access to electricity: *“only the government benefited...more electricity [was] being generated and they were able to export to the neighbouring countries so that they would earn foreign exchange - which did not bring any benefit to us either. It was the authorities who benefited.”* Water supplies are a major problem, as it seems many of the boreholes and water pipes provided by the authorities after resettlement are no longer maintained. Women describe how they have to *“draw water from the Lusitu River which is a long distance from here and you cannot manage*

*to carry water on your head twice a day from there... Even at our local hospital they do not have water... [and] pupils have to carry their water requirements daily from their homes in bottles [to school]...."*

Access to formal education, on the other hand, has dramatically improved. Only a few mission schools existed in the Tonga area before resettlement. Most education was done the traditional way where children were trained in the villages by parents, elders and people with specific skills. After resettlement, and even more so after Zambia and Zimbabwe gained independence, many more schools were built in an effort to make education available to all. And while some older narrators lament the way formal schooling has usurped traditional education, they also acknowledge its importance. And younger generations are in no doubt that only those who are sufficiently educated will be able to secure employment: "... today, we see the value of education. That is why we want all our children to become educated. So that when they have their own homes, they will keep us."

Access to health facilities has also improved, but many narrators say the increasing cost is putting it out of their reach. At the same time, knowledge of traditional healing methods has declined. Many of the older people who held that knowledge have died, and because so many traditions and relationships were disrupted by resettlement, their skills were not always passed on. One man explains how the break-up of families and communities during resettlement affected traditional learning: "*When a clan of people live together in a community they share a lot of things. The way people were moved from the valley, families were separated...like here, a lot of these people around us are not even our relatives... passing on teaching also has to be within clans, you know.*"

Money plays a far larger part in the lives of the Tonga today than before. They need cash to buy food and other necessities, since their land is much less productive, and to pay for services such as health and education. Some narrators say they generate some income from fishing. But few have regular work or paid jobs, and many say they cannot always afford health care or school fees for all their children. Of course, it is unlikely that the Tonga would have remained outside the money economy. Yet the way resettlement disrupted Tonga social and religious networks and challenged their cultural identity, coupled with the dramatic decline in their natural resource base, has

perhaps made adjustments to the “*modern world*” far more difficult and traumatic.

Despite the anger and disappointment in these accounts, they are also full of ideas for moving forward, and of positive hopes for the future. The Tonga want their stories told, and they want others to understand what they have been through, so that more people appreciate their role in the establishment of the Kariba Dam, one of the most ambitious development projects of its time. As one man states: “*There is a need for the future generations of the Tonga people, and the country as a whole, to be well and properly informed on this matter.*” This booklet goes some way to meeting that need.

## CHAPTER 1

### Tonga experiences of the resettlement

The resettlement of the Tonga from the Zambezi Valley took place almost 50 years ago and, perhaps surprisingly, people still vividly remember the process and its effects on their lives. For many, the initial reaction was more of disbelief. *"It was just a command that 'Move away the flood is coming, you will be wiped away by the water. All this land will be flooded by water.' That was the only thing we were told. We all laughed 'ha, ha, ha, ha, ha'."* (Monitor) Another narrator remembers the authorities informed Tonga people about the resettlement well in advance but that the idea of having to move away from the Zambezi Valley, where they had lived for generations, seemed almost like a joke: *"They started in 1956, first putting posters from the road coming from Gokwe. These posters were for moving us next year. We thought they were joking but they were serious. In 1957 they said get ready and start packing your property. Those who had cows and goats started driving them, even dogs.... When we finished building [the houses] we came back to carry our property, nchili, grinding stone... we started moving. The Government said: 'You settle where you want to settle'."* (Chief Siachilaba)

The oral testimonies show that there were different responses towards the prospect of resettlement. According to Bbola, people from his village in Zimbabwe were informed about it back in 1954 or 1955 and they complied with it because they saw no options for resistance. He recalls it as a peaceful process but he does, however, express regret about having to move from his ancestral lands: *"We did not try to resist at all. We were willing to move out. We were warned ahead of time. Big lorries were used to ferry us upland with our families, belongings and livestock. We were moved on the 17th June 1957. No force was used in chief Sikalenge's area where we were living.... The people of chief Sikalenge were taken to Makota, others were taken to Lubu while others were taken to places of their own choice.... Each one was consulted and we were warned ahead of time that the water was coming and that was as far back as 1954 or 1955.... Naturally we were not happy to leave the valley, the land of our forefathers. Even if we were willing to move, when the time to move came deep in our hearts we were not happy, but we had no choice... We heard such stories from Chief Chipepo's area. The people of Chipepo tried to resist and they did not want to move to an area called*





**Tonga people and their belongings being transported to the resettlement locations, Zimbabwe, 1961**

*Makkaaza. The people of Makkaaza were forcibly thrown on the lorries and were taken to other places. There was heavy fighting there [in Chipepo] and many lives were lost ....”*

A traditional healer, Maxford, recalls how some people were so scared of “the white man” that they feared to ask him questions about the resettlement: “I recall white people coming with big trucks to collect us saying the valley was going to flood, so they were moving us to higher land.... White people were a rare sight and seeing one was considered ill luck. My parents, my four sisters and my grandfather did not want to argue with this ‘ghost’ ....”

As an illustration of people’s anxieties, and inability, or unwillingness to accept the resettlement, Siabeza remembers how people repeatedly returned to their valley after having been moved: “We people of Chiyala...moved out peacefully. Lorries were used to ferry us, starting from Siampondo, Sichooba, Siameja, Maanza who is also known as Chiyala, all of us were moved and brought where we are now at Siatwiinda. There was no fighting....There was no bloodshed at all...They first warned us of the impending water rising from the lake, but at first we had refused to hear the warning. They insisted, telling us the same thing and we sat down and discussed the impending problems if we did not comply. On our own we resolved that we should just comply because we were promised free transport and indeed they

*did just that.... The funny thing which we did was this ... after we were dumped in the new area ... during the night we trekked back to the same place in the valley where we had been evacuated from. Back in our minds we were not fully convinced that the dam would cover all the mountains in the area."*

### **"We were the losers in that fight"**

Chibbinya recalls that people agreed to be resettled and that they were free to settle where they wanted. He does, however, regret having to move away from the Valley: *"The District Commissioner came to our area and put some pegs saying that that was the possible level of the flood after the closure of the river. When we looked at the pegs they covered the area around our villages and fields so we were told to move to the new areas before the flood came.... The DC took ...3 years informing people [about] the relocation. We travelled to various places until we settled here where we are today. When we identified the proper land and built structures, we then asked the DC to carry us to the new place. Because we had all the time to move, we carried everything we had with us. If fields could be carried we would have carried them with us to these new places because of their fertility. We did not wait for the level of water to rise and force us away like others did... Such people left their homes hurrying and hence left some of their material... What I remember most is that after the flood reached the pegs put by the DC, I was surprised because I wondered how he knew that the level of water would get that far. No one believed the water would rise to cover our homes and fields. The other thing is that it was not easy for us to accept leaving the area.... We did not fight to remain because we saw that it was useless and we were the losers in that fight. At the end the water was going to sweep us away had we resisted. But the decision to leave was difficult to take. If I think about the famine we are experiencing today and the way we lived I sometimes cry."*

A disturbing incident is recalled by Gideon who tells how a chief refused to be resettled and was forcefully moved: *"Oh! That Chief Sinakatenge wanted to refuse. He had refused saying: 'No. No white man shall resettle us.' He was by force carried and tied.... Aha! He really refused... until he was arrested by the policemen, who threw him in the truck."*

Another violent instance occurred where Tonga people refused to be resettled and government soldiers fired their guns, killing several people. As one narrator recalls: *"Now when the [Kariba] dam was actually finished being built, a big and serious issue came to the [Chipepo] village: that all the people were to be shifted, to go and be resettled at Lusitu ... We were refusing to shift and then it became a fight... We were just using a war of words... What we had were spears only. We gathered in camps: us on this side, while the whites were on the other side at the riverside. They had tents and bugles, and trumpets were sounding now and again, and soldiers paraded. We, too, did the same with our spears. We used to parade and the flag was there flying.... Two weeks elapsed while [the officials were] urging us to shift [to the new resettlement area]. Then the Governor of Northern Rhodesia came himself ... and instructed that all spears be laid down. He said: "You people, those of you who have... alternative places where you can go, should say so now." People of Chipepo ... teased the Governor saying he was not the Governor.... On hearing this, the Governor got upset and ordered that people should prepare for a war the next day.... True to the word, the following day in the morning ... guns were fired by the soldiers and some people died. There was total panic... At that point Chisamu Village was burnt down by soldiers.... The issue of burning down the villages, including storage bins, was extended to other villages.... People were loaded onto trucks to Lusitu the day following the shooting. Soldiers loaded food into bags and brought it to Lusitu after people had already been transported ... We were shifted and resettled in a hurry and in a confusing way ...."* (Siabalombe)

Very few positive references to resettlement are made by narrators. Notable exceptions are Jingamulonga's comments that *"... the population was growing so there was going to be a shortage of land along the Zambezi River. Another positive change is that the Tonga have mixed with other ethnic groups and have learnt a lot of things. If they were still living along the Zambezi, they would maybe still be isolated.... In the new area there are [also] many schools and roads that have been built which would not have been built in the Zambezi."*

One says that people from his village were moved to an area good for cattle, being without tsetse flies. The benefits, however, were short-lived since they were moved again to another area and the tsetse fly control dismantled: *"Cattle grow well here. It is only these days, as a result of wild animals -*

*especially elephants - crossing the Zambezi River from the Zimbabwe game reserve that we are experiencing tsetse fly again. There used to be tsetse flies here sometime back but those were wiped out by the tsetse control department of the government of the day...[but the] government removed the personnel of the tsetse control department from here sometime back."* (Stanard)

### **Variations in compensation**

The Tonga people were compensated for resettlement in different ways, and methods and amounts varied substantially from area to area. Short-term food and monetary handouts were given while boreholes, water pipes, irrigation schemes and small development projects were also implemented. Some narrators believe the compensation was adequate while others feel they were promised things that never materialised.

Siabeza gives a positive account: *"We were not mistreated in any way. When we were evacuated we were compensated according to the number of huts each one had. All the huts were counted and each owner was rewarded according to the number of huts he had."*

Likewise, Wailesi says: *"Everything was collected [from our village] and the whites told us that food like maize and milk would follow. This food was meant to sustain us before we were really settled so as to clear over new fields. The food was given to us for two years. For those of us who were resettled near the lake, water tanks were built and piped water was available to us."*

Tala recalls how grain was given but that it was too little. When the people went to the authorities with complaints about starvation they were ignored: *"We lost a lot of grain during the [resettlement] process...We were given little grain. It was as good as nothing. We were given for only three months. In October the elders sent a delegation to Sikanyana to tell him that people were starving. The grain given as compensation was too little. Sikanyana said he would consider their complaint. Nothing was done...."*

Monitor says that monetary compensation was promised but not given in full: *"When we arrived here, not all the money promised to us for resettlement was paid. The money that each person was going to be paid for resettling*

*was much more. We did not get all that money for lost houses. We were just given a bit."*

Some narrators feel cheated by the authorities: *"We were ...robbed from the time we were resettled. Most people were disappointed because it wasn't their intention [to leave their land by the Zambezi River]. There is no Tonga who isn't upset. The Europeans fooled us much. They cheer of our being resettled -we got a bit of maize, after a few days, this was completely finished. ...We don't get a thing or benefits...we were really disappointed."* (Cibbami)

A few narrators believe that compensation was better for the Zambian Tonga. One Zimbabwean says: *"We were given nothing like that way they were compensated on your side [the Zambian side]...The way someone's village is in Zambia, his drums, and his hut everything is money there. They were given money there but with us, nothing. We were divided and told to move, we left our houses. Right now they are covered in water, no bonus, no nothing."* (Siasili)

## CHAPTER 2

### Subsistence farming and fishing

Farming and fishing in the Zambezi Valley is remembered positively by the Tonga narrators and they recall how an abundance of food was produced in their *incelela*. These were small, periodically flooded, plots of land with mineral-rich soils along the river banks. They had enormous benefits in terms of food security because they allowed people to harvest twice a year. Good harvests from these gardens, as well as from their fields in the bush, meant that most Tonga were able to produce enough food to cover their basic needs.

Siabeza recalls how maize was grown in the river gardens during dry seasons, while millet was grown in the bush fields during rainy seasons: *“Life was very good in the valley... We used to grow early maize...along the river. We used to do dry planting in May, June, July and in August we started eating green maize. We ate this maize during November up to December and this marked the end of the rainy season... We used water from the river to grow it and not rainwater. We used to plant finger millet during the rainy season plus maize and other crops which in our language we call kamyoompyo, [which ripened later]... My father Zyagola used to build a very big barn. He used to employ 30 to 40 people to harvest the crop. These people would make several trips carrying the crop to the barn... but the barn would not be filled up at all. We had more than enough food.”*

A narrator remembers that a variety of foods were available all year round: *“We had good fertile soil for agriculture in the valley... By the banks of the Zambezi River we used to grow maize. Up on the higher and dry land we used to grow millet, beans and crops called cigaligali and bweengo in Tonga. Bweengo is a tuber, which you pound to make a cake-like delicacy... This ‘cake’ is called coonde in the local language. When you serve it you add some salt for taste. It has some oil, which is highly nutritious ... especially to children...We used to grow groundnuts, pumpkins and watermelons. These crops were mainly available during the dry season for it was easier to grow them by the banks of the river...we used to grow sweet potatoes as well...As regards to food all the year round then, there was not much problem because we used to grow food twice a year. If we did not make it during the rainy*

*season, we were sure of doing so during the dry season by irrigation along the banks of the Zambezi.” (John)*

Sometimes severe droughts affected the Valley, which forced people to go and look for food in other areas. Mpemba recalls: *“Oh, we sometimes experienced severe droughts because of poor rainfalls and because we had very little farming lands.... We would leave to go to Kumbo where we would find some job for food. When we got that food, carrying it was another problem. We would put them in sacks, two each, then tie them to a crossing stick and carry them on the shoulders. It was really hard times...when there was a drought.”*

### **Farming in resettled areas**

Farming conditions changed dramatically after resettlement and many narrators explain that the Tonga *“wanted to live there [in the Valley] all their life because food was available to them all the time. If they did not harvest well at harvest time, they could plant maize anytime.”* (Patson). The loss of the riverine gardens affected the Tonga badly. Many narrators complain that harvests often fail in the dry resettled areas, where they suffer poor soils and low rainfall: *“They till the land but what holds them back are the erratic rains. Rains, by and large, do not occur until crops reach maturity. You therefore find that crops wither and dry up instead, due to the scorching sun. Otherwise, people of this place are very hard working....”* (Mary).



**Preparing wild grains which are still used during periods of hunger, Zimbabwe, 2003**

As a result, many narrators complain of food shortages: *"We were brought to this place where we cannot grow enough food to eat. For that reason we are unhappy."* (Siabeza). Another agrees: *"By and large there is a food shortage here at Lusitu early every year...If this trend is not eliminated, the thing they call in English the 'hunger circle' will not finish here."* (Angenes).

Siabalombe, a successful farmer, contradicts the idea that less food can be produced in the new areas. He explains that some people, who did not have much land in the past, are now better off and grow more food: *"At Old Chipeco land was not much, especially for growing crops. Here land is more [available] to those who call themselves real farmers. Those who do not grow enough food are the ones saying land here is not much."*

Emely argues that only well-off farmers can produce a surplus of food now: *"The fact of the matter is that some of these landowners have more land than they can actually fully and effectively utilise while other people go begging for land. I actually raised this issue of idle land with my headman to find out if this idle land could be utilised by those who have little or no land at all.... The truth of the matter is that not everybody owns [land]... The rich use the poor to get more or better yields from their fields. The rich cultivate more hectares of land. Not to backbite anybody like this old man here [but if] you would have come a few weeks ago, before people started harvesting their early maturing sorghum, you would have got a surprise as to the number of people working for food from that old man.... He receives at times 50 people a day who want to work for food. The truth is that this is the type of life here and because of this, hunger will always attack us. Poor people will always remain poor while rich ones will continue to exploit the poor to get more or better yields, year in, year out...."*

Clearly land and wealth are factors that influence someone's perspective on resettlement. Someone who can now grow a surplus of crops is likely to view resettlement more positively than someone who is experiencing hunger.

## **Problems with wildlife**

Destruction of crops by wild animals is a major theme in these narratives. Some narrators say that hippopotamus and elephants used to attack their gardens along the Zambezi River while others argue that the problems with



wild animals started after resettlement. This probably largely reflects the situation in the narrators' original area.

John does not recall any problems with wild animals before: *"We did not have problems with wild animals at all in so far as the growing of food was concerned, because there was plenty of space for grazing, for instance for the hippos. As for elephants, these were already wiped out or extinct by the time we were born. They were there a long time ago and, for the people of our generation, we knew them only by hearsay ...."*

Monitor, however, says that in his area there were problems with hippos and elephants: *"In August to about September the hippos started destroying our maize. The only problem we had in farming were the wild animals. [The others] were elephants ... which were destroying a lot of our crops at Nkoombwe. To protect crops from being destroyed by hippos, we also have [to] leave our homes and go and stay at the field. You have to build an upstairs house (house on stilts) which was very strong. We were sleeping at the field to protect our crops from being destroyed. Those who had their fields near drinking water...[had]great problems."*

Elizabeth explains that before Independence elephants were not a problem because district officers would kill any "troublesome" animal: *"There were no elephants then. We only had this elephant problem after we were resettled. Those days Sikanyana shot all the elephants which were reported to be troublesome. The meat was shared to villagers."*

During the 1970s the authorities established the Communal Areas Management Plan for Natural Resources (CAMPFIRE) to better conserve and administer wild life. New laws were introduced, which for instance did not allow farmers to kill wild animals that attacked their crops. Incidents of crop destruction were to be reported to the authorities who in turn would send game guards to the affected area to kill the wild animals. Attacks by wild animals on crops in the resettled areas are a major source of resentment. Siabalombe is distressed that the Campfire Program does not adequately solve the farmers' problems: *"Elephants are destroying crops.... People spend a lot of time, especially during the day, at their fields guarding their crops. Several reports have been sent to authorities about destruction here due to not shooting elephants. We do not think we have credible game guards at all.... Game*

*guards sent here spend time drinking beer only. Is it that we are supposed to grow food for these elephants? As for the owners of these elephants, we will demand that they compensate us with food since our food is eaten up by elephants... we work hard to grow our food... You see, recently, game guards came and have already gone back without solving the problems... when game guards come here they should shoot the elephants so that they go away... But as it is, they just pretend, they just hoodwink us... they track these elephants, they find them and then they say they have young ones, so they cannot shoot them. They have young ones, but then what about our crops? [What are] we going to do since our food has been eaten up by elephants? What are we going to feed the children with?"*

Lilian, a Zambian narrator, believes that the authorities have another agenda: *"Anyone whose crops are eaten and destroyed by these wild animals is supposed to report the matter to the area councillor who is supposed to take up the matter with Siavonga District Administration... often the answer we get from government authorities is negative. The government... prefers having the animals around and undisturbed for they are profitable in earning foreign exchange. Because of this, we hear, the government would rather a person dies instead of an animal."*

There is little mention in the narratives of people benefiting from the Campfire programme: *"[Campfire is] this organisation which kills elephants and gives the proceeds got from the sale to the people... It has actually caused more problems to the people. Today if you give a report that elephants are a problem, you are referred to Campfire. Campfire does nothing in turn.... I only heard that the Campfire funds help to build schools. There is an incomplete block at our school which is said to have been constructed by Campfire funds."* (Elizabeth)

Another narrator suggests that Campfire funds should be made available to the communities to pay for education and food: *"We are starving yet Campfire has got money. Campfire should give us money to buy guns so that we scare away elephants.... I suggest they share the fund among wards so that we buy food and pay fees for our children."* (Tala)

## The importance of fishing

Another key source of food for the Tonga before resettlement was fish. Yet fishing opportunities and methods have changed in the Tonga area since the creation of Lake Kariba. Many Tonga who used to fish in the Zambezi River lost this possibility when they were resettled into areas deep in the bush. Jairo explains: *“At Old Chipepo, most of the people lived by the river whereas [where we are now] it is only just a few...”*

Previously fishing was done mostly in pools along the shores of the Zambezi River and its tributaries, because the fast flowing waters made it difficult for the Tonga to catch fish in the middle of the river. Monitor recalls how fishing was done by both women and men using simple methods of hooks and baskets: *“We did not know much of fishing [along the Zambezi] apart from fishing hooks. Using fishing nets? We did not know about it. We only knew how to use fishing hooks [and] mazubo which women used to catch fish. They used to catch a lot of fish.... Only Bembas knew how to use nets....”* According to the narrators, net fishing in the Zambezi River was only introduced to them through development projects initiated by the government in the 1960s.



Women fishing using mazubo baskets, Zimbabwe, late 1950s

Around the time of resettlement no permits were required for subsistence or commercial fishing. Today they are required for commercial fishing, though people can still fish for their own private use without permits. Chief Siachilaba remembers that fishing opportunities were good in the Zambezi River and how no permits were required: *"The fishing on the river was good. There was no problem! If you fish [today] without paper allowing you to fish you are arrested sure. Every year we were told to renew our paper, paying money yearly. We were not paying [when we stayed along the Zambezi River]..."*

Today it is mostly Tonga men who fish, mainly on a small scale. Wailesi explains how small-scale fishing in Lake Kariba provides additional income for many Tonga: *"We find money to buy our food because when we catch the fish, we sell it and get money to feed our families. Farmers are very few along the banks of the Lake. Most of us are fishermen who sometimes grow crops on a small scale."*

Bbola emphasises the commercial value of small-scale fishing to the Tonga: *"I think the present life is better because fishing nowadays has been commercialised. Unlike in the past when we were using fishing hooks and caught only one fish at a time, nowadays we use three fishing nets each, and we are able to catch more fish. When we sell the fish we are able to improve the diet of our families."* Another narrator explains that many people sell fish to buy or exchange for maize: *"Where you have a good [fish] harvest you take fish using canoe boats to exchange with maize... After selling [the fish] you go home and give your wife money for the family to buy bags of mealie meal..."* (Chief Siachilaba)

Some Tonga narrators explain that there is a problem of over-fishing in some areas, and so the authorities have introduced quotas on nets. Some believe that quotas and restrictions are good because they help to conserve the number of fish. Others argue that fishing regulations restrict peoples' incomes: *"Money we get from the sale of fish is more than what we used to get a long time ago... However the advantage we had then was that each fisherman was allowed to use as many fishing nets as possible... But now, the problem is that each fisherman is restricted to using a maximum of three fishing nets only. This is according to the current fishing regulations, which we are*

*required to observe very strictly, failure of which one could either be fined or jailed once found out. So you see, it is hard for us because if say a crocodile raids your three nets, for instance, then you do not only lose the fish but the nets as well... it would force you to go home to sell your cow or cows so that you raise capital money to replace the fishing nets. This is the problem we are now facing.” (Andrew)*

Senior Chief Mweemba, on the other hand, argues that fishing regulations and quotas are needed: *“The modern fishing method is bad because you will fish indiscriminately... You kill even the young ones and the eggs are destroyed as well. You find that fish cannot evade the drag net except those which run into the caves and under big trees – these are the only ones which lay their eggs... We have a law [telling people where to catch fish]. This law is there and is effective... The killing of fish these days is more destructive than in the past...”*

Some narrators explain that there remains much potential for fishing in Lake Kariba. However, only a few of the large-scale fishing industries are Tonga-owned, mainly because of the huge costs associated with establishing these industries.

### **“We need money to buy food”**

The self-sufficiency of the past, especially in food, seems to be lost. Many narrators talk of the greater need for money and formal employment since resettlement. Cash is needed to buy food, say narrators, since land in the resettled areas is less fertile, but also for basic necessities such as clothing, kitchen utensils, farming equipment, and services such as schooling and healthcare.

Lillian, a farmer from Ntambale, Zambia, argues that the greater importance of the cash economy has affected the way people support each other: *“My information is that help was offered more readily, freely and willingly at Old Chipepo than than here because most of the things there did not cost money. But these days, money is an issue - and as a result things that long ago would have been given away without charge, these days money would be asked for in exchange.”*

She goes on to explain that today many necessities need to be bought: *“In*

*as far as the people of Siavonga District as a whole are concerned...for most, if not all things, one has to use money, in one way or another, to acquire them... The situation here is or was not the same as at Old Chipeco... Here most of the food we eat is bought..." People manage in different ways: "Money, in this place, is obtained in so many ways, for instance one may sell a chicken and get money to buy what they require. There are also times when people travel around looking for wild fruit called **busiikka** found here. One can collect this fruit and sell in order to raise money...We buy maize from Bbwe-Munyama, where our friends grow more than they require...."*

## CHAPTER 3

### Tonga relations across the waters

Before resettlement, social and family ties between Tonga communities on either side of the Zambezi River were close. In some places the river was so narrow that people could call to each other and they could easily travel to the other side to visit relatives and friends. A narrator explains: *"Some of my people are in Zambia, we could go there using canoes...Even if there is a funeral, they could just shout to us, then we would cross over."* People used to cross the river to take part in ceremonies to commemorate their ancestors: *"Oh, yes! We used to visit each other... we stayed like that with the Zambians on the other side. As for ancestral worship, those from the other side who had ritual powers, and also others from this side who had ritual powers knew each other."* (Gideon)

#### **"Many people never saw each other again"**

When the water flooded the Zambezi Valley and forced the majority of the Tonga communities to resettle, these close family and spiritual ties were greatly disrupted. A narrator reports: *"... We did not come here [to the new resettlement areas] with our families. They live further up. I don't live with them here. From the time that we were moved, we have lived up there."* (Siasili)

Stanard in Zambia says he has *"...relatives in Zimbabwe. Before the Kariba Dam was built and Kariba Lake formed, there were relatives staying on both sides of the Zambezi River. When the Kariba formed, those that were on the other side of the river went to Zimbabwe, while those that were on this side remained here in Zambia. Our parents tell us about those relatives and they even call them by name. However, some of us do not know those people in person."*

He explains the political circumstances that have made it difficult for many Tonga to visit relatives: *"Visiting as such is minimal. You will recall that the previous government in Zimbabwe or Rhodesia...very much discouraged contacts or visits by people on both sides of the river and lake. That brought about reduced contacts or visits by relations .... If the Zimbabwean authorities*

*of the time were allowing the contacts and visits like they do now, the close contact would not have been lost.* ” This disruption had great emotional, social and religious consequences for the Tonga: *“We were very disappointed because we were separated from our relatives and shrine leaders... Many people never saw each other again, then worship and shrines were no longer properly done. I am not happy about this.”* (Gideon)

Travel documents could be obtained to cross but it was a laborious process: *“In older days, it was almost unheard of to be easily issued with a passport, hence visits to our relatives across the lake were very rare, if any....”* In the mid 1990s, however, special regulations were introduced that made it easier for Tonga people to cross the water without passports. Andrew says: *“Due to improved immigration laws nowadays, it is possible to visit those relatives who stay on the other side of the lake. All I have to do if I need to travel across the lake, is to arrange to obtain a passport. I can do this by going to my chief to request for a letter of commendation, which I in turn bring to the local police officers for endorsement. Once this is done and then papers forwarded to appropriate authorities, a passport could be issued without difficulties. As for actual travel itself, there are service boats that cross the lake regularly and once on the other side then you go through the immigration officials for clearance. Thereafter you proceed to your relatives for your visit or to go and perform the ritual ceremonies of calling the ancestors to resolve whatever problems that may be facing the family or clan.”*

Another narrator, Mpokbwa, emphasises the improved situation: *“... you go via Binga, you just inform them that you are visiting your relatives then they would give you a letter and number of days to stay. If what you had gone for prolongs, you can always inform them, then they would prolong your days.”*

However, some narrators still find it difficult to obtain the relevant documents, as Stanard describes: *“Being villagers we find it difficult to acquire passports or travel documents. By and large passports are obtained from Lusaka and people from villages are generally timid of going to Lusaka. They fear the pickpockets found in big towns. If it were possible that the passport office could open and have sub-offices in rural areas like Siavonga, possibly many people would acquire passports.”*



The Tonga narrators express much regret about breaking up of their communities. Siabalombe explains the effect this has had on traditional teaching: *"When a clan of people live together in a community, they share a lot of things. The way people were moved from the valley, families were separated, family trees were destroyed like here, a lot of these people around us are not even our relatives. So passing on teaching also has to be within clans, you know."*

Bbola agrees: *"This solidarity was there before the advent of the lake. But, nowadays it is no longer happening because of the dam and all that is involved in the movement of the people between the two countries."*

Many narrators become very emotional when they talk about the disruption of their communities. One narrator exclaims: *"I don't want to hear about how we were barred from communicating with our relatives and meeting them. Because if I think much on this... no!"* (Gideon)



**David Mainza who interviewed many of the Zambian Narrators and produced the CiTonga version of the booklet**

## CHAPTER 4

### Tonga religious ceremonies

Tonga narrators recall in detail traditional religious ceremonies such as rainmaking, and commemorations of departed relatives. Some explain that these are still performed; others say that in their location they have disappeared. Many regret the loss of the ceremonies and believe that it has caused the Tonga religion to decline. Some changes are associated with resettlement, which broke community ties, and others with the introduction of Christianity and westernisation.

#### Rainmaking ceremonies

Rainmaking ceremonies, *malende* or *mpande*, are some of the most significant traditions in Tonga culture. Many Tonga believe that special skills are bestowed upon rainmakers, the sikatongo – these are spiritual leaders who preside over agricultural shrines. It is these men and women who communicate with the ancestral spirits to ensure sufficient rains and good harvests. They are inheritors of the spirits of the founding Tonga people.

Andrew explains how hot springs could be considered a rain shrine: *“This place is called Mbila fishing camp. [It] gets its name from the hot springs that are over there. In our local language “mbila” means boiling and in this case it is the hot springs that gush out and also bubble. The water is really hot and if you put a cob of maize where the water bubbles out of the ground, it will be cooked and readily salted since the spring water is salty. It is not advisable to feel this water by dipping your hand. Not only will you be scalded but our culture has it that those springs are a rain shrine. This shrine belongs to a clan of the big frog or the dove, and there is one person in that clan who performs rituals of calling the rain when there is a drought. This person’s name is Maalila, he took over from the late Syanamabbuluku of the same clan who too was possessed with the rain spirit. He has the ability to dip his hand in the boiling spring water without getting scalded. He also has the ability to converse with the rain spirits that are down in the ground from the source of the hot springs. Anyone not possessed with those spirits cannot do that.”*

He goes on to explain how a rain ceremony would be carried out in times of drought: *"If, say, a certain year rains do not come in time, perhaps there is a severe drought, [the rainmaker] is consulted by the elders as to what the problem could be and what needs to be done if the situation is to be corrected. Once consulted, he advises as to whether or not rain will be there that season and what needs to be done by the people by way of carrying out a rainmaking ceremony."*

The actual rainmaking ceremony would include the sacrifice of a goat and the participation of all community members: *"[The rainmaker] normally, in such a situation, advises that the people raise a black goat for slaughter for sacrifice at a specially made shrine at his house. Offals are taken to the hot springs where they are duly offered to the rain spirits by dipping them in hot salty water. A day would normally be appointed for performing this ceremony. All participants walk to the rainmaker's home and there is no one allowed to put on white attire as white scares away rain and white clouds do not bring rain anyway. People go there as a group and sing as they walk to his house..."*

The participants sing and dance and use certain colours to appease the rain spirits: *"As people get to the rainmaker's place, they continue singing and the tempo is usually raised and they dance too, around the rain shrine. Meanwhile the rainmaker would be lying in his house communicating with the rain spirits. At an appropriate time, he gets out of the house dressed in his rainmaking ceremony attire. These are two pieces of cloth, a black one and a red one. The red one is strapped around his waist while the other is strung across his shoulder and he holds two ceremonial sticks of kaffir corn stock in his hands. These are called "misfunko" in the local language. He also carries a ceremonial axe called "bukano" in Tonga. This is an arch-shaped axe."*

The role of the rainmaker is very significant because he communicates the information of the spirits about rain and harvests to the community: *"He joins the dances around the rain shrine. At that point, he will announce to the people what the rain situation is. He will tell them whether there will be just a little rain and warn people to brace themselves for hard times ahead in view of the would-be impending hunger. He will tell or warn them what to do – like grow enough or just a little food – depending on his observation*

*about the rain that season. Accordingly, appointed elders will present people's requests that they be given water for drinking, both for themselves and their animals, as well as water for their crops. A procession then follows from his house to the rain shrine at the hot springs. The rainmaker joins the people as they walk while singing and dancing. They even ululate. At the hot springs, the singing and ululating continues as well as clapping while the rainmaker then performs his duties of calling upon the rain spirits to accede to people's requests. Once the ritual is over, the rainmaker directs that the people walk back to their homes, but taking the route through the rainmaker's home. Somewhere on the way, he tells those staying far to break off from the rest of the people and walk fast to their homes as rain was going to find them on the way. You will find before people reach their homes rain falls down. When this happens, people are required to walk on and singing happily that the much needed rain has come at last."* (Andrew)

One narrator recalls that some of the rainmakers were women: *"The chief rainmaker, though living on the plateau at the time, was Cibwe. To her we used to take a **budima** dance troupe."* (Siabalombe)

### **"Our gods never helped us again"**

Previously Tonga people used to cross the Zambezi to take part in rain ceremonies of Tonga communities on the other side. A narrator recalls: *"Us from Sinakasili, we were meeting people from Sinamakoonde after both of us had done our malende in our own chiefdoms.*

*Then we used to gather together with the other group from the other side of the river."* (Monitor)

After resettlement, the use of rainmaking shrines and ceremonies diminished. Some narrators say they have been less effective and explicitly blame this on the break-up of the community: *"We used to gather here as well as them gather the other side. After that we joined together the ceremonies, then it would start raining. Nowadays we do not conduct the ceremonies as we used to do. They are not well performed... [because] we are separated from the other group. The one to the other side is supposed to conduct a certain performance to the other side and then likewise to the other side. So now we are not meeting in such activities and there are no miracles done as before."* (Chief Siachilaba)

When the Zambezi Valley was flooded, the ancestral shrines that were the focus of the rainmaking ceremonies were submerged. The loss of ancestral shrines is by some narrators seen as a reason for the weakening powers of the rainmakers and why there are fewer rainmaking ceremonies. One narrator explains: *"Those rainmakers no longer perform their duties satisfactorily. Most elderly who know much of these things remained over there [in Zambia]. The shrines and other sacred objects sank below the lake. Our lives of worship here are very bad. I view that these things are like this because of resettlement, which was deliberately done by other people."* (Gideon)

There is a great sadness in these accounts. Chibbami says, *"I don't want to lie because when we separated most elderly people remained there [in Zambia]. The problems about rainmaking ceremonies were that no people were any longer allowed to cross [the river]. The rainmaking ceremony came to a standstill. The shrines were under the water. Our gods never helped us again, because they were angry. There were or are no more rains. It's best we stop talking about it. Most people whom we were faithful enough to carry out ritual duties remained over there. The shrines were deep in the water. I am not happy."*

### **New rain shrines and ceremonies**

Some Tonga narrators say that even though the old shrines were left to be submerged under water, some people made new ancestral shrines in the resettled areas. Ceremonies were carried out by spiritual leaders and the resettled people, in order to summon the ancestral spirits to the new areas. John says *"the spiritual shrines were not removed or transported to Lusitu; they remained at Old Chipepo together with rain spirits and were submerged when the lake formed. Only spiritual leaders and their spirits came to Lusitu... Those possessed with rain spirits continued practising and new rain shrines were erected at their homes. In this way, though in a dispirited manner, we continued to hold our rainmaking ceremonies."*

Some narrators describe how malende is still carried out. Siabeza gives an account of a recent rainmaking ceremony: *"It is true that the rain can come. Not too long ago we started building shelters.... Before the shelters are erected, we first of all go to an ng'anga and he is the one who tells us how and what to do. He gives us the assurance that if you do this and that, the rains will come. We went to the ng'anga last Sunday and on Monday we*

*were busy building the shelters for malende. On Wednesday in the afternoon, rains came just this week which ended yesterday.... The problem is that only the young people are left; all the old people who used to push the young ones are gone. Only a few are remaining. I am the only one left who is still trying to tell the young people to do this and that. We told the boys that on Sunday they should come together to start discussing the matter, and for certain the Lord heard and answered our petition and the rain came.... I am only a son to those who owned the malende, and my father Zyagola was the one directly involved in malende affairs."*

### **Ceremonies to honour the dead**

The Tonga also perform ceremonies to commemorate the spirits of the dead, which are called ***budima*** or ***ngoma buntibe***. The spirits are perceived to play a beneficial role in the lives of the living as protectors but they can also cause illnesses and misfortunes if they are neglected. Some narrators say that these ceremonies are still performed; other people say they have changed or disappeared. Many narrators believe that these changes are a result of the social disruption caused by the resettlement, as well as the influence of Christian and western beliefs.



**Tonga funeral ceremony, Zimbabwe, late 1930s**

Siabalombe vividly describes a budima ceremony: "*Budima is performed when there is a death. If the death is in another village some distance from here for instance, the big drum would be sounded very early in the morning and the men with bells and rattles would then perform a war cry... The whole village would then hear us and know that come sunrise, the budima*

is going to that funeral in that village... the whole village would gather at the base where the big drum was sounding. Details about the procession would be given out... The preparations would include haircuts in readiness for a war situation. Appropriate dressing in, for example, loincloths for men... You would find that maybe three or four budima troupes would converge at the funeral site that day. The point is that only one budima troupe has to perform at any one given time, not two or more. If more than one budima troupe perform simultaneously, then there is a very high probability of opposite performers' spears spearing each other.... You will appreciate that [in a budima troupe] there are drummers, there are *nyeele* players and there are those who dance with spears.... The women sing together with men. The women also get heated up with their rattles.... Once the drums sound... it is a serious business."

Jairo recalls how performing budima would create a sense of unity among communities: "I can talk about the budima dance in two ways. Firstly, it is certainly good because it shows and promotes unity of the people. What it is, is that when the budima dance troupe performs at a funeral even the bereaved family joins in and they are helped to get over their bereavement more quickly. They become occupied, so to say. Secondly the budima used to act as an army. At a funeral were several budima dance troupes, which can fight a deadly fight or war. The budima dance troupe of a village is a group that is highly regarded and renders services to the village, including protection of the village."

Some narrators, for example Andrew, say that they still introduce their children to the ancestral spirits: "Each time the children came home, say for holidays, we used to sprinkle them with water from a water pot in the house and at the same time call out to our ancestors, telling them that the children who were not present during the last ceremony are now home and could they recognise that and take care of them...."

## Reasons for change

Wailesi explains that Tonga elders still possess the knowledge of ceremonies such as buntibe. He fears, however, that Tonga traditions and ceremonies will be lost because this knowledge of these dances is likely to die out with the older generation: "These were our dances. Ngoma ha Buntibe... was performed during funerals... Then you go to the funeral house to show that

*you are also mourning.... [The dances are] still there. It has remained with us elderly people but our children don't know it. When we die, this dance will finish. ... It will be the end of Tongaship.... During Ngoma ya Buntibe... our old fathers used to wear **mibbiadwa**. Some old ones used to wear **nsuku**.... On their upper arms they wore bangles. They carried spears in their hands. We used to see our elders doing this even before we learnt how to play nyeele. When we joined later, I found that this dance is nice, yes. We young ones were not shown how the drums of buntibe were made. Only elders knew. They are the ones who made them. We just saw ready made drums being beaten."*

One man expresses anxiety over the loss of traditional culture, blaming the disruption of communities during resettlement.: *"There is a difference [in our life since we moved]; as you can see how we have started settling anyhow and anywhere. Again the things which were happening in the olden days, they are no longer happening. For example, traditional dances like **makuntu**, **masabe**, as well as the days of praying to the rain maker. The rules are not being followed properly. Sure, all the traditional cultural beliefs are no longer carried out properly...[because] we are separated. We do not meet each other anymore. For us from Sinakasili we were meeting people from Sinamakoonde after both of us had done our malende in our own chiefdoms. Then we used to gather together with the other group from the other side of the river. Budima dance was performed during that time."* (Monitor)

More commonly, however, it is Christianity, rather than resettlement, which seems to be considered the major cause of the decline in spirit worship in the Tonga area. One narrator explains that he no longer performs the old ceremonies because they clash with his Christian beliefs: *"I lost my elder brother and I was given his name. I am, accordingly, supposed to brew beer and call him, together with other ancestors of mine, to intercede in any way on my behalf in case of problems. So far I have not done that. I am a Christian and I feel I cannot do that. I just agreed to look after his children and even up to now I am still doing that... Some Tonga cultural events are actually dying now. Christianity is taking precedence."* (Stanard)

Another narrator explains how Christian worship is taking over traditional practices: *"... Most of the young people who are born these days don't know*



anything about the old practices. They only know the modern way of worshipping and that is through Christianity. This is what they are following now. Most of the old people who used to do these things are gone.” (Rev. Bishop) Some people still carry out traditional religious ceremonies in spite of the fact that other members of their family attend church: *“Even nowadays we are still keen and active in paying homage to our ancestral spirits. I am myself possessed with my ancestral spirits and do practise the clan tradition of calling upon our ancestors to help in case of problems in the family. Even though my young brothers and sisters go to church, I and other elderly people still pay homage to our ancestral spirits ...”*

One narrator laments that the younger generation view old Tonga traditions with disrespect, even fear: *“...Church practices have taken precedence these days. A lot of children refuse to attend these ceremonies saying that they are satanic and that as believers they do not want to be associated with such practices which are contrary to the teachings of the Bible. Now you see children feel and say that our ways and beliefs are satanic and that we are satanic people!”* (Andrew)

Another narrator, while acknowledging that the Christian Church brought development to the Tonga, adds that the introduction of Christian beliefs to some degree caused Tonga beliefs and ceremonies to be distorted and neglected. The Church did not approve of such ceremonies and this, she says, not resettlement, is the main cause of changes in Tonga culture and religion: *“True, this [Christianity] is something that is good and progressive but I still feel that on the other hand it is not right. Some of the culture that used to save lives has been destroyed. The church does not accept that some old practices of people be continued. In some cases you may find that as a result of not following some old practices of people’s way of life, that brings about loss of life...This change was going to come about with or without the resettlement.”* (Rosemary)

### **“We value the culture we inherited”**

Some narrators, such as Baron, see the changes in Tonga religious beliefs and ceremonies as a result of a battle between Tonga ways of living and western lifestyles: *“We also had other traditional ceremonies like masabe,*

*makuntu and ngoma. Only these things are no longer practised ... Us old people from the valley are still here. We still teach our children our culture from the valley. We still brew beer to appease our ancestral spirits.... I always tell this new generation that if they don't brew beer for all their ancestral spirits, bad things will befall them. Their ancestors will forget them.... We value the culture we inherited from our elders so we are also teaching the youngsters of this tradition... This tradition of the white man, we know all about it because we used to work in towns like **Bulawayo** and **Wankie** during the days of the valley. Binga was built after we were resettled in 1958. You cannot really compare these two lifestyles... It is like now we have a war to fight. We will see who will lose at the end of the day."*

A number of narrators state that certain Tonga cultural traditions and religious ceremonies, such as *budima* or *buntibe*, are still carried out – or being revived. Siabalombe explains that he is the custodian of drums in his area and that elders there teach the young to perform the music and dances for the spirit ceremonies: *"The drum you see here is here because presently I am the top of the budima in the village. All my age mates and counterparts in Musulumba village are no longer living, so as an elder budima dance troupe member of the village now, I am honoured to take custody of the big drum...The budima is an established traditional dance of the Tonga and has a future. It is a symbol of the tribe or an identity. The budima in this village almost died but it is now on its way to full recovery.... It is us elders who are still living [who are behind the revival]. We teach [the] grown and young people...Yes, they very much want to learn. ...We train them once a month."*

**The distinctive  
musical tradition  
of  
the Tonga  
remains strong,  
Zambia, 2001**



## CHAPTER 5

### Tonga cultural traditions

Tonga cultural traditions and language are described in detail in the testimonies. As with other topics, not everyone's view or experience is the same. Some say the traditions continue; others that they have all but disappeared. Some associate the decline with resettlement; others recognise the part played by Christianity and western influences. What is common is a great sadness at the weakening of Tonga culture.

#### **Coming of age ceremony: *nkolola***

A number of narrators recall the Tonga ceremony *nkolola*, which was performed when young girls reached puberty. These ceremonies may possibly still be carried out in some Tonga areas but these narrators all argue that the tradition is no longer widespread. Some believe that training of young girls into adulthood is good; others argue that the old ceremony should be changed to suit the current situation with unwanted pregnancies and HIV/AIDS. None of the narrators seem to be able to explain why the coming-of-age ceremony is no longer practised.

Stanard says: *"The initiation ceremony is held when a girl or girls reach puberty. It is aimed at grooming a girl into and preparing her to enter womanhood, let alone motherhood. The ceremony is to show that the girl is now grown up. The ancestral spirits are also informed accordingly through conducting this ceremony and are asked, in their own way, to join in the celebration. As for the boys, especially if that girl has a boyfriend, they too are informed about the new status of the girl. As for the training part itself, the girl is confined in a house, for weeks or days, where she undergoes instruction about what is expected of her as a woman, and possibly as a mother. So I would say the initiation ceremony is a school whereby a girl is trained to be a woman, and a mother possibly... The trainers are elderly women of high reputation in society."*

Trouble explains that *nkolola* is no longer practised: *"A long time ago they used to have [initiation ceremonies for girls]. When we were growing up such things were not there; even nowadays, such things are not common."*

**Mary  
Siankulu,  
Zambia,  
2001**



*The only thing that happens nowadays is that when a girl is leaving home to join her husband, a group of elderly women, usually aunties, will sit the girl down and advise her on how to behave in her new home. Nowadays things have changed, life has changed. It is not easy any more."*

Mary remembers that *nkolola* used to be practised in a nearby village: "Well, concerning *nkolola*, some villages practised it; my village in particular did not have it. Some of my friends like those at Silumu village over there have it. Many did not do it...they knew about it but they did not just practise it or they just stopped it." (13)

Mary argues that the girls' initiation ceremony should change because, in her mind, it does not adequately prepare girls for married life today: "I wish to add that as for girls, when they go through initiation ceremonies, we here do not carry out these ceremonies like other people do. Other people take the opportunity of teaching and instilling good morals of decent living to girls when they are confined in houses during the initiation periods. Here all we do is concentrate on ensuring that a girl is very well fed and cared for during her period of confinement so that by the time she is out she looks very nice and presentable for marriage. I think we are behind here on this matter and I think it is time that decent living morals were taught and underlined during these confinement periods. ... I implore the parents that they should stop their old ways of carrying out the *nkolola* ceremonies [such

*as] simply fattening the girls... They should adopt new ways of conducting the initiation ceremonies so that the girls are very well prepared to go into the marriage and motherhood once they graduate... If possible, these instructions should be carried out in conjunction with hospital authorities, like they do these days on family planning matters."*

### **Youth games: *nitulu*, *ntilani* and *mantombwa***

Some Tonga narrators explain how young people used to play different games. All agree that these games are no longer performed because young people are now more occupied with other activities. No narrator attributes these changes specifically to resettlement.

Sikafulu recalls how Tonga youth used to play games which would train them to become adults: *"[We used to play games] all throughout early childhood till about 15 to 20 years, then we would be considered as adults. The girls would gather food so that when we met we would share what they had and what we had managed to kill when we went hunting. All the food we had was used when we started 'playing house' - this was the game we had. We used to call it nitulu. In this game it was not only the girls who did everything like our mothers. We the boys acted in similar fashion as our father.... In addition to this we had another game where we would play husband and wife or plainly just boyfriend and girlfriend. This one was like this: every time we played we would weave trinkets. These were called ntilani. They would be made for our girlfriends. So what we used to do about this time apart from weaving bracelets for our lovers, we would be taking fruits to their mother - and mothers, being as inquisitive as they are, would know that you are the boyfriend."*

Isaac also remembers how children played games that imitated adult life: *"Also the association of each sex with a particular type of work is so commonly accepted that it is an essential part of children's play in the game known as mantombwa. This usually occurs during the period accompanying and following the harvest, when children build themselves play houses at the edge of the village. These are often no more than untidy bundles of thatch. In the work of building, boys undertake the portion that falls to men in the building of regular huts, girls emulate their mothers in their work. The boys make miniature beds within the huts. They go off and pretend to herd cattle, or hunt small birds in the bush to contribute to the cooking pot. Either boys*

*or girls may provide vegetable food obtained from their mother or raided from the gardens. The girls prepare the food, and boys come to be fed. Usually in such play, the children pair off as husband and wife - no sexual relationships take place in the process. Those most active are probably between six and twelve, while smaller children are brought along to play the role of infants in the family. The older people approve of the play as a forerunner of adult activities."*

One narrator says that after resettlement these games were no longer performed: *"Ever since we left the village, I think these games also came to an end. These games are not being played any more and in actual fact these games are a sort that are not taught, but one learns from seeing and observing how parents behave. One uses one's imagination to make up a game...no one is following these traditions any more, particularly our children."* (Sikafulu)

## **Marriage traditions**

A number of narrators describe how traditional Tonga marriage arrangements were carried out and how families played a major role in choosing a suitable spouse. The narrators say that marriage patterns have changed today and that it has become more common for people themselves to decide whom to marry. Some regret this. Siabalombe describes how a Tonga marriage ceremony took place in the past and explains how many traditions had to be observed that expressed respect between the two families involved, as well as between the spouses: *"Long ago marriage was conducted in a simple manner. The first thing to do for someone wanting to get married was to get a mediator, someone to go between, and this person was called sityombo. The sityombo would then be asked to go to the family of the bride-to-be to make the request. If the response was positive, he would then be ... told that the bridegroom-to-be must bring a bundle of firewood to the parents-in-law to-be. Sityombo would assist the man to get that firewood which would be laid down at the door of the mother-in-law-to-be. The firewood had to be nicely cut and arranged.... The following day sityombo would accompany the bridegroom to be back to his in-laws-to-be.... Food would be specially prepared and served to the groom-to-be. Nevertheless, the bride would not be seen, let alone enter the house where the man was. She would instead put the food by the doorway... There was no question of having a full view of the wife-to-be at that stage."*

*"The process... would be put on hold till the rainy season. During that time the mother-in-law-to-be would be asked to prepare a field.... That field was for the son-in-law to weed, harvest, build an open storage shed for maize to dry in and then build a bin for eventual storage of that maize.... When the time for actual marriage came, the dowry would then be paid in part. A goat would be paid initially and that was called cuuma kkhoma. The next to be paid was part of the dowry to enable the bride to be collected. This was a hoe, traditional hoe, accompanied by pieces of beads.... By late evening, a team from the man's side would arrive at the girl's home secretly.... Someone from the girl's side would catch her and call out for the people from her husband-to-be to come and get her. The girl would cry out.... There would be a lot of singing especially from the woman's side.... The team from the woman's side would be demanding to be paid for every few short steps they make. Pieces of beads were used as payment. You would find that by the time they would arrive at the bridegroom's house the cock would have crowed several times and possibly it would be towards early morning. That night there would be no question of real sleeping as such...."*

*"The following night is when the bride would be taken to the bridegroom's house. She would be clad in ... underwear that were extremely difficult to remove. These are for the man to remove but not without a long struggle, maybe the whole night.... The following day in the evening, the wife is required to serve food to her husband. She was required to walk with knees and elbows towards where he was seated with his fellow menfolk. The husband was required to meet the wife halfway, where he would be given a wash of the hands by the wife...."*

*Her mother-in-law would be seated and anxiously waiting her return. This is the kind of respect we had then. You find that, even to date, homes that went through such marriages are still intact. Not like it is nowadays whereby even strangers...are easily and cordially greeted by girls or women. That was a taboo."*

Daimon argues that Tonga marriage arrangements have changed today: *"This [arranged marriage] is no longer happening because the boys and the girls no longer want the system to be practised on them. They now fall in love on their own."*



Some narrators believe that the changes are caused by the breaking up of the Tonga communities which accompanied resettlement and their relocation among other groups: *"The marriage pattern has drastically changed. My area of discontent is where there is intermarriage, because previously we married from the [Tonga] tribe. Now we are just marrying other tribes which do not have similar cultural values and are disobedient. On marriage, I am not happy. Most people were not happy about mixing up... to be separated from our tribe."* (Gideon)

Siabalombe reveals anxiety about western interference: *"When the time came near to our shifting, some white men came and advised us that our [marriage customs including dowry and arranged marriage] had brought death and war in the villages and that we should let the young girls make up their own minds on who they should marry. Things became worse off when parents stopped choosing husbands for their daughters and sons... After that we stopped the practice. We accepted it because these people ruled us... There was no way that you would not follow the rule because it was forced on us by the courts..."*

Jinga Mulonga believes that Christianity has distorted traditional marriage arrangements and causes break-ups between couples because young people do not know the family background of the person they marry: *"The church has a big negative impact on our culture. It has created a rift between the old and the young generation. The old generation still abides by the old way of appeasing the ancestral spirits while the young generation argue that they only know God and nothing else. Come now to the promotion of culture, the young generation does not want to be involved as they label everything satanic. Even our cultural dances are now slowly disappearing because nobody still practices them. Dances like **ngoma buntibe, chilimba, chinyaanya** and others are all things of the past. That does not go well with me. However, since the church has already come there is no way we can do away with it. I am a Roman Catholic myself but still like my cultural practices since they do not make it difficult for me to worship God.... The young generation wants to arrange its own marriages.... What do they know about the backgrounds of each family? That is why there are many broken marriages today; it is because of these things."*

**Jinga  
Mulonga,  
Zimbabwe,  
2003**



### **Tonga language: “our culture is being invaded”**

According to many narrators the Tonga language, CiTonga, has changed. One narrator explains that CiTonga is only taught at low levels in schools in Zimbabwe. Even in Zambia, where CiTonga is taught up to university level, some narrators fear that CiTonga is giving way to other languages. In spite of their sadness at this, there is little resentment towards other communities for these changes – although Zimbabwean narrators wish that CiTonga should be taught to a higher level in their schools. Some narrators believe that it is the parents’ responsibility, as well as official education in schools and even churches, to teach young people CiTonga. Some Zambian narrators relate the decline in language directly to westernisation and resettlement. The Zimbabwean narrators, however, blame the decline in CiTonga on the lack of government initiatives to promote it.

Chief Siachilaba explains that only recently were the Zimbabwean Tonga students able to study their language in the lower grades in schools. He sees this, together with Christianity, as a threat to Tonga culture: *“In schools our children do not learn our language but are taught Ndebele, which is alien to us. If they are not learning Tonga then what is the point of them learning other languages? ...Together with this and the church these things are responsible for the destruction of our culture because our culture is being invaded from all directions. How do the young ones get to know about his people’s culture if it is not learnt in schools?”*

## **“Here all you find are Shona books”**

Another narrator agrees that Tonga schoolchildren in Zimbabwe are not taught CiTonga adequately. Instead they are taught other Zimbabwean languages: *“... the Tonga [language] they learn is very basic, mostly they learn **Shona** and it seems that is what the government wants... The children want to learn Tonga and they ask for any books that old people may have had... we have Tonga books but they are far away in the town at the bookshop, here all you find are Shona books, some Ndebele, but no Tonga. [We all speak] the same language that we are speaking now - all are Tonga like me. They are all my friends and they all speak Tonga.”* (Siasili)

Chibbinya relates the decline in CiTonga to a general discrimination against the Tonga, and the dominance of CiShona and CiNdebele: *“The way the Zimbabwean Tonga are treated is very humiliating as the government despises them. They are considered as one of the backward people. What is painful is that we are like that because of the relocation. Instead of them coming to our rescue by solving our problems, they enjoy laughing at our poverty and backwardness. In schools they teach our children Ndebele instead of Tonga. So... the culture they know most is the Ndebele one which they learn in schools.... We view ourselves as Zimbabwean Tonga.... What we are mostly concerned with is the revival of our culture here in Zimbabwe. Without our culture it would be very difficult to protect ourselves. The Shona, the Ndebele, and the Tonga differ due to their culture.... The Tonga people have lost some of their culture but there are some areas that are difficult to change like the issue of surnames. My child takes my totem as the surname, not my surname. Children belong most to the mother, not to the father. We are still matrilineal [in our society] like before, although we are facing lots of pressure to change through the influence of the Shona and the Ndebele laws. What the current government does is not proper as when it makes laws of the country they only consider what the Shona and Ndebele do and neglect what the Tonga do in their culture. The end result is that the laws that are made tend to favour the Shona and Ndebele culture at the expense of our culture. I personally hate that.”*

Jinga Mulonga strongly regrets that CiTonga is not taught in schools in her area: *“Our Tonga language is not taught in our schools but we are forced to learn Ndebele, which is not our language. Do you think you can respect someone who forces you to learn his or her language?”*

The **Zambian Tonga** do not face the same problems with language because they are taught **CiTonga** in schools: “Yes, [we learned **CiTonga**]. By the time I had completed grade 4, I was able to read and write a letter in **Tonga**. I could do this very well without difficulties...” (Giveness)

Isaac says that **CiTonga** in **Zambia** has changed, however, because of the influx of other people to the area for fishing: “The changes have come about because of the influx of people who speak different languages who have come for fishing in the lake. These are the people who have mixed with us, people like the **Bembas** and indeed people from the whole of **Zambia**. Otherwise, we ourselves still speak **CiTonga** as we used to speak it in the past. **CiTonga** used by the young people is no longer fluid and pure. They mix it with other languages. They don’t speak it the way we used to speak it ourselves, it is sort of diluted. They mix it with languages like **CiBemba**, **CiNgoni**, **Luvale**, **Silozi** and other languages. There are times when you find our children using different languages even among themselves. You will find them using, say **CiBemba**, **Nyanja**, **Lozi** etc while they are **Tonga**. We as old people don’t like it, because it will kill our language. We don’t like this thing at all as old people.”

Gideon explicitly blames the changes in **CiTonga** on resettlement: “The resettlement exercise was very bad. Most of our children are no longer obedient because of copying other languages and tribes of other people.”

Another narrator argues that there should be less emphasis on **CiTonga** in schools. Instead she emphasises the importance of learning English as a way to develop in education and employment: “Furthermore, children should speak English when at school and should not be allowed to use **CiTonga**, the local language, the same language they use at home. Children do not attain any meaningful knowledge. They learn nothing! They do not know how to speak English, which is the official language, even if they complete their basic education.” (Mary)

## Positive aspects of cultural change

Contrary to the regrets expressed by some narrators about the decline of **Tonga** culture, some narrators argue that “traditional culture” can be a burden, which is sometimes manipulated for personal or political ends. There is a

sense among these narrators that traditional culture is not something to be preserved at all cost.

One narrator, for example, explains the conflict between headmen being chosen through their **clan** rather than elected by popular vote: *"During the time my father was still alive, he used to say that a headman is chosen in recognition of his contribution in a village. Apart from this, the election of a headman was done in clans... This issue of clanship, in these matters, is still there. This clanship is, somehow, oppressive in my view. What if the clan does not, like I have already said, have enlightened people to keep on assuming the position of headman in a satisfactory manner, what happens? The subjects suffer or get oppressed and suppressed all because of clanship culture that needs to be adhered to no matter what.... Let there be popular vote and election on such issues like is the case in other fields. Let this clanship way of choosing a headman come to an end. There is no clan here, as far as I know, that was God-appointed to assume positions of headmen. Let headmen be elected on merit...It is not fair that we continue to be oppressed and suppressed all because of culture."* (Jairo)

Another narrator agrees that certain people use traditional "culture" to reinforce their own interests: *"Conflicts have occurred whereby those people, who feel they have unjustly been excluded from the leadership role... instead of opting for popularly electing headmen, have fought hard to have the situation arrested and reversed in the name of culture.... I personally would choose that headmen be popularly elected as opposed to using culture to get them into seats of power."* (Lillian)

She describes the problem of relatives grabbing a dead man's wealth away from his immediate family in the name of "culture": *"If say my husband dies and that in establishing our field we were working together with my husband, then his relatives will not take away the field upon his death. At least they are not supposed to do that. If they take anything at all in the form of the field, it should just be a small piece and leave the bigger portion to me to use with my children...fields are by and large made by husbands and their wives. They carry out the hard work of cleaning the fields by cutting down trees and bushes. At that time, relatives of the man do not take part in helping to clear the fields at all. All the planning of where and how to*

*make, say, our field would be done by me and my husband and children if they are big enough. It follows therefore, that in the event of my husband dying earlier than me, I should be allowed to continue using that field with my children.... [In case of a dispute] the relatives of the dead man would preside [over the field].... If mutual agreement is not possible, it is possible that the headman or headmen could be asked to hear such a case.... In doing so consideration is given to ensuring that only relatives are allowed to use the place in question."*

People's attitudes to tradition often depend on a person's own situation, for example, their status as a widow or a male relative of a deceased person, or as an appointed or elected headman. This is one reason why some narrators are seen to welcome cultural change while others resist.

## CHAPTER 6

### In scarce supply: water and power

The authorities, as well as the Tonga, knew that water was scarce in the resettled areas and as part of the compensation the authorities provided boreholes and water pipes. *"Those of us who were enlightened used to ask where and how we were going to get water for domestic use as well as for animals, since we were aware that there was no water where we were to be resettled. The District Commissioner explained that he was going to provide us with piped water and erect storage water tanks."* (Andrew)

Only a few narrators say that the current water situation is good: *"As far as drinking water is concerned there is no problem because boreholes were sunk for us."* (Siabeza) Others argue that the majority of boreholes and water pipes were not properly maintained by the authorities and as a result there is a lack of water in the resettled areas. Many narrators resent the fact that they were resettled to make way for Lake Kariba which, in theory, should have provided them all with water – if the water pipes were maintained. One narrator explains the problem: *"When we were brought here, boreholes and wells were sunk and that is where we got water from ... These days the wells are no longer functional. ... There is thirst in some parts where there are no boreholes. Kariba Dam ... is there but it is so far away that people who are living in this area cannot go there to get water."* (Isaac)

Some Tonga live closer to Lake Kariba or its tributaries where they can draw water. One narrator explains that drawing water from the Lake can be dangerous: *"... people have resorted to drawing water.... This has resulted into some children being caught and eaten by crocodiles, some goats have been eaten by crocodiles as well as some cattle when they go to drink...."* (Isaac)

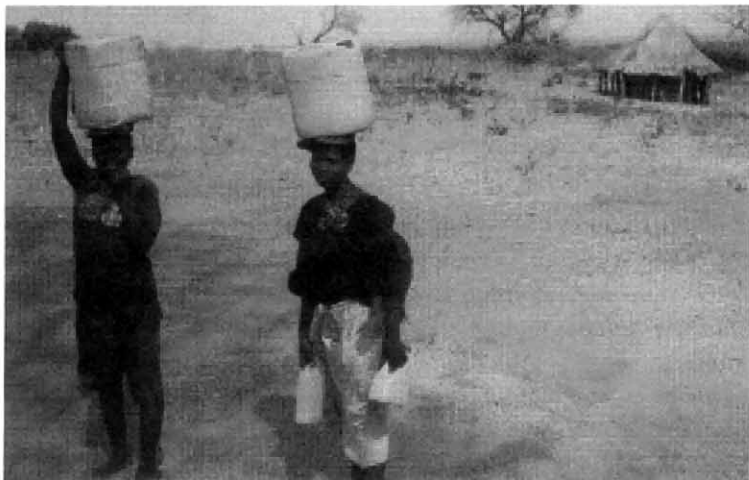
Others claim that water drawn from the tributaries brings health problems: *"[It] often causes diarrhoea to both children and adults since water from the tributaries of the Lusitu River is unclean due to the fact that, by and large, people here do not ... have latrines. Instead, they use the bushes.... Living is not nice if you do not have clean water."* (Emely)

Andrew argues that water is not adequate even in schools and that people have to pay high fees for water where it is available: *"... now the local authority is demanding that we pay for water. Where then do we get money to do so, since most of the people are not in formal or gainful employment? If you talk of a few of us who are fishermen, it is not possible that we can earn enough money to be able to pay for water charges to cover all the other people who are not working. So water is not there and this is the major problem.... [At] Manjolo Secondary School... the water problem is adversely affecting that school. At times teachers are supplied with water by tankers. But... students...do not regularly get enough water for use. As a result of this, some students give up attending school altogether and some teachers ask for transfers to other schools. You know water is life – and getting enough and consistent supply of water for bathing, drinking and other domestic uses is very important...."*

For women, poor water supplies create an extra workload: *"You see, like these days when you spend most of the time working in the fields, you find that as a woman, once you come back from field work, you have to carry your 20 litre container to go and draw water from the Lusitu River. You have to carry that pail of water on your head, tired as you may be."* (Mary)

She believes that there is a need for the authorities to tackle the problem *"Eh! This place here, water is a very big problem. During the rainy season... we draw water from several shallow ponds around us but even then, if it does not rain for three or four days, water becomes scarce. We draw water from the Lusitu River which is a long distance from here and you cannot manage to carry water on your head, twice a day from there... Even at our local hospital they do not have water. Water for patients is also drawn from the Lusitu River. At the local basic school, pupils have to carry their water requirements, daily, from their homes in bottles. Children are suffering .... What we think about this water problem is that the Government should help us by providing many mono pumps since villages here are many. They should consider doing so village by village or at least one mono pump per two villages if possible."* Some villagers have themselves formed groups to seek alternative funding to solve the problem: *"...People from some of the villages formed groups of 10 people in each and applied for assistance to have clean water provided to them. GTZ [a German development organisation] provided*





**Women carrying water from the Lusitu river, Zambia, 2001**

*funding for the boreholes to be sunk so that some people, at least, can get clean drinking water. The government, however, has been difficult to deal with in this regard.” (Emely)*

## **Electricity**

The Kariba Dam was created to provide electricity for industries in Zimbabwe and Zambia. For the Tonga the creation of the Kariba Lake had many costs and, ironically, the electricity generated benefited few. Even today, the majority of Tonga do not have access to electricity. As one narrator says; *“the power lines just overpass us....”* (Stanard)

Some narrators mention with regret that they were promised compensation in terms of electricity from the authorities – promises that have not been fulfilled: *“We people in the villages have not benefited from [electric power created from the dam] at all...It is so because [the Government] did not fulfil the agreement which was made between us and themselves... We had arranged that each village was going to be given power...We are still waiting and watching even if some of our people have been resettled like this. We don’t know what will happen because this was a promise.”* (Isaac)

Some Tonga, especially in the bigger towns, do have electricity but overall there is a strong sense of disappointment about the lack of power: “As

*regards [to electricity], we did not benefit in anyway at all...; only the Government benefited.... More electricity [was] being generated and they were able to export to the neighbouring countries so that they would earn foreign exchange – which did not bring any benefit to us either. It was the authorities who benefited.” (Siabeza)*



**Lake Kariba**

## CHAPTER 7

### Health and traditional medicine

Since resettlement the health situation has changed in the Tonga area. Some narrators argue that there has been a decline in knowledge about herbal medicine, partly caused by the loss of plants submerged by the Kariba Lake, as well as by the general disruption to communities. Others say medicinal plants are still available and that traditional healing continues. The building of clinics and hospitals accompanying the resettlement introduced new medical care options for the Tonga. More now seek treatment from hospitals and clinics but many argue that the costs have now become too high. As a result, some narrators explain, they turn back to traditional healing methods, which are cheaper.

#### Health in the Zambezi Valley

Some narrators believe the environment of the Zambezi Valley was healthier. Monitor says: *"Along the valley we were living a good life because there were no complicated diseases like malaria. [Now] we are being attacked by malaria all the time.... The only diseases we were being attacked by were cijoolo and dysentery...."*

Simon, a hospital attendant, agrees: *"I can say there was no specific illness people used to suffer in those days. The only sickness I was told attacked people was smallpox. This is the only sickness I have heard of in the history of the valley.... People used to live to a very, very old age..."* These statements should, however, be seen in the light of the current health situation in Zambia and Zimbabwe where the HIV/AIDS is widespread. The AIDS pandemic may cause people to recall the past with particular nostalgia.

In the Valley, hospitals were few and a Zimbabwean Tonga recalls how people had to cross the Zambezi River to receive medical treatment: *"You see we did not have hospitals or clinics in the valley at the time.... We did not know about tablets or pills. Those who needed and received formal treatment were the ones suffering from leprosy. Even then they had to cross the river by canoe to go to Kanchindu Mission Hospital on the Zambian side. Those who were too sick were to wait for death to take them. This is*

*because there were no hospitals or clinics this side of the river.” (Andrew)*

## **Traditional healing**

Traditional healing was widely practised by the Tonga, as a traditional healer explains: *“Some people strongly believed in traditional medicine. I for one grew up in a family that believed so much in traditional medicine. If someone suffered from an illness that white medicine could not cure, it was because it was an evil spirit which had possessed that person. When this happened, masabe would be performed. My grandfather performed this in our village. He was well known for it.” (Maxford)*

Knowledge about traditional medicine and practices was extensive: *“Before displacement, we had medicines for different sicknesses or diseases. For example, if someone was suffering from stomach ache he would be given leaves of a certain shrub to chew and the problem would stop instantly. Or if someone was wounded, say in a fight, we would bring either a root or leaves of a certain tree, stamp them and put the powder on the wound and healing would take place in a few days time.” (Bbola)*

Malaria could be treated with traditional methods: *“What we used to do, in that case, was to get a small dry bundle of grass from the roof of the house directly in front of the door.... This fire was passed round the head of the patient until the grass was almost burnt out. The remaining burning grass was then thrown in the direction of the sunset.... This was done in the late afternoon or early evening only. Once the patient felt the heat of the fire, the malaria would go away. You could find that by the following morning, the patient would be able to sit and be on the road to recovery.” (Andrew)*

Today malaria is mainly treated at hospitals, Mary says: *“Nowadays, we have malaria, and any person who gets it has to go to the hospital....”*

## **“Our elders didn’t show us the herbs”**

Some narrators argue that Tonga knowledge about traditional healing has been lost. Bbola explains: *“In the past we used roots and herbs for treatment...[but] the trees and bushes which we were using for treatment have all been submerged in the lake. Secondly, old people who knew these medicines are all dead. They kept this knowledge and as a result when they*

*died, the knowledge died with them, unfortunately."*

Baron argues that the traditional medicines are still available, but agrees that most people with the right knowledge have passed away: *"A lot of people were treated using herbs. We drank these herbs. Today all these are forgotten. We are now concentrating on hospitals. People who knew the medicines all died. Some of them died of old age. Yes [the herbal medicine is still there] it is only that we've forgotten them. They are no longer used. Our children go to hospitals. Our elders didn't show us the herbs."*

Maxford believes that the upheaval of resettlement did cause a decline in traditional forms of medicine: *"I was born in the valley, not very near the river but I loved the water very much. It is where I learnt most of my magic from, from my grandfather. He was a witch doctor. He used to cast out evil spirits from possessed people and he passed the teaching on to me.... After we left the valley a lot of things just became confused. People had to work hard to till the land. It was a time to adjust. People lost values and beliefs. Some of us were lucky to carry on what we learnt... traditional healing."*

Simon blames the missionaries' disdain for African medicines for some of the decline: *"...I think the early missionaries also contributed a lot to the loss of knowledge of our traditional medicines; they are not like our modern young missionaries. Old missionaries, instead of taking interest in the African medicines, they did not like the idea - because according to them it was primitive. They did not even waste their time finding out something about African medicines. Their job was to condemn anything African because it was primitive and dirty."*

### **Modern healthcare comes at a cost**

Even though more hospitals and clinics were built in the Tonga area after resettlement, they are not easily accessible for all. One community organised to raise money for a clinic itself: *"We were given only one clinic here by the Government, which is across the tar road. The resettled people are on the eastern side of the tar road going to Kariba Dam and the clinic is on the opposite side. Not everyone has easy access to the clinic due to long distances. Because of this we organised ourselves with the help of our councillor..., and made financial donations for the construction of another clinic on a*

*self-help basis, at Lusitu sub-centre, near the river Zambezi. This clinic is ...very helpful to those who came from Old Chipepo...*" (John) Hospital fees have increased and many narrators say they cannot afford medical treatment: *"I would say people, generally, have difficulties in raising money to meet hospital bills due to poverty. People just do not have money. What is happening is that many people are sick in villages and are unable to go to health centres for treatment because they are not able to raise the required money."* (Stanard)

Mary agrees: *"Here in Lusitu ...the problem lies with the hospital... The hospital is there alright, but the conditions for one to attend and be properly attended to are hard for most of us to meet. Firstly, the hospital has no medicines. Secondly, when a mother delivers a child at home and then takes the child to the hospital for the under five medical care, they demand that the woman pays 2,500 kwacha for them to attend to the baby. Thirdly, when someone is sick at night, when you take that person to the hospital, that time, you can only do that when you are ready with a sum of 2,500 kwacha to pay for waking up the doctor. You have also to pay 1,000 kwacha for the exercise book for records. ... If you have a patient at night and you have no money to enable you to pay for waking up the doctor you cannot take the patient to the hospital even if you want. You just have to do the best you can with the patient throughout that night even if the disease was a treatable one. This could unfortunately lead to loss of life just because you have no hospital fees."*

In this respect, the disadvantages of having to pay for services seem to outweigh the advantages of resettlement having brought these facilities to people. Some narrators clearly use both kinds of medicine, depending on circumstances: *"We have a clinic at Lusitu.... Medicines are there but there are times when medicines are not available and we have to go to town to purchase them.... Traditional medicine, mostly we use in cases where clinical medicine fails."* (Trouble)

## CHAPTER 8

### Education: formal and traditional

Only a few schools existed in the Tonga area of Zambia and Zimbabwe before resettlement. These were mission schools and they were primarily used by the elite. Most education was done the traditional way, where children were trained in the villages by parents, elders and different types of crafts people. After resettlement, and even more so after Zambia and Zimbabwe gained independence, more schools were built in an effort to make education available and free for all. Today there are primary schools in all major villages in the Tonga area and a relatively large number of secondary schools are also found. Mary says: *“Education had not yet come [when we lived in the Zambezi Valley], there were no schools until the time when the white man came to move us... There are a lot of schools here...”*

Most of the narrators had only a few years' official schooling and most left school to take up paid or unpaid work or because they were married. Some narrators, especially elders without official schooling, think the changes in traditional education are part of a larger process to do with the erosion of traditional life caused by resettlement. Some narrators also consider factors such as westernisation and Christianity to have been influential. Some feel official education is corrupting traditional ways of behaviour, saying that boys and girls become undisciplined and behave badly.

The complex and somewhat ambivalent attitudes to formal education expressed in the narratives suggest different perspectives between generations. The older narrators seem to lament that formal education has usurped traditional education, even though they see the benefits of formal schooling, noting that their children have things their fathers never had. Younger people, on the other hand, see the spread of formal education as almost wholly positive. One woman in her thirties says: *“... today, we see the value of education. That is why we want all our children to become educated. So that when they have their own homes, they will keep us.”* (Trouble)

There is also a general recognition that only young people who are sufficiently educated will be able to secure employment. Some narrators therefore regret

that current school fees are so high that they are unable to educate all their children. All narrators agree that teaching about resettlement is missing from the curriculum, something which they encourage the authorities to change.

### **Schools before resettlement**

Monitor recalls that there were only two schools in the Zambezi Valley and that people used to send their children across the River for education: *"Kapiilu [and] Kanchindu were the first schools in the Gwembe Valley. They did not have any school at all [on the Zimbabwe side of the river].... What they did was to send their children to stay with their relatives here, where there were schools. Only those who had parents with knowledge of education... decided to send their children to learn here in Zambia...."*

Andrew agrees that only children with parents who appreciated education went to mission schools before resettlement: *"There were no schools [before resettlement].... Schools were brought in 1960 after we had already left the valley. Those who had keen parents, or [who were] from well-to-do clans, could be sent across the River to Kanchindu Mission for education.... They normally did only two years of primary and ...they could by then speak good English. After returning from Kanchindu, those who did not bother to further their education somehow or on their own, did not progress further."*

Teachers of other tribes would come to teach in the Tonga area but they often did not stay for long because of illness. The area got a reputation for being unhealthy. One narrator explains: *"Teachers used to come [to] teach for a short time, and if he dies or becomes ill, he would return to Wankie because most of them were Nyasalands. Two or three years would elapse without a teacher at school ...until further arrangements ...would ... allow another teacher to be sent. And that teacher would also teach, teach, teach and teach. If he dies, that is the end. No other teachers would come, and they would say there is death in the BaTongaland. It would take time, maybe five years or three years.... That is the reason why most of our age mates are not educated.... If you hear of a teacher's death, his workmate runs away and reports the matter to his relatives saying such a place is not alright. Even though it is alright."* (Gideon)



John recalls that the staff at a Zambian mission school encouraged local Tonga students to become teachers: *"Schools came in 1950. The first missionary to come to Old Chipepo was... an American. He set up his mission at Chab Boma and started a school.... The other mission centre was at Kanchindu which is about 60 to 80 miles from Chab Boma so, as far as education was concerned, there were no problems. Most of those who finished school ...were encouraged to take up teaching by their teachers and local council administrators.... By encouraging locals to work as teachers in their area, they were of the view that they were going to improve the level of education generally in the valley and thereby improve the quality of life for the area as a whole...."*

Cibbami laments that he only had a few years' education because he had to find employment to sustain himself: *"I missed [education] but I really like it much. Education was good to me but I hurriedly went to work. Some who learned became drivers, some policemen. It was so helpful to know how to write and read. Education! School! These were very good."*

Trouble explains that when she was a child, her parents did not see the benefits of formal schooling. She thinks that they might have seen things differently and let her continue her education, if schools had been more common locally: *"Schools were very few then and a lot of people did not see the value of education. I only went up to grade three. My parents felt that me and my two older sisters and three brothers were better off helping at home than wasting time in class. But look at us now – maybe if we had gone to school life would have been much easier... My parents did not like education, but then maybe if there were many schools [we] would have been encouraged to go."*

## Causes of cultural change

Before resettlement the majority of children were educated by parents, elders and other skilled members of the community. Children were taught many different skills: *"Informal education was there before the missionaries opened schools where the rudiments of reading and writing were taught. In the evening after supper the elders would have us sit down together as youngsters to be taught the rudiments of how to defend ourselves if war broke out. We were taught how to fight our enemies using spears, knobkerries, stones and the use of shields for protection. They used to teach us the art of building*

*houses. We were taught how to clear the bush where we wanted to make our fields. We were taught how to trap wild animals and birds. Specific skills were taught and practised by adults such as basketry and pottery for girls, and blacksmithing for boys...[and] how to make shafts for spears ” (Isaac)*

Tale recalls: *“We were taught about life in general. They told us what they expected of us. Things like, don't steal, you should not fight. We were also taught how to look after cattle and goats. When we became of age they were meetings held by both boys and girls. That is when we were taught about married life....”*

Some narrators believe that traditional forms of education have been lost and they associate the changes with the same combination of forces: resettlement, westernisation, formal schooling and Christianity. One narrator expresses great anxiety about the erosion of traditional education caused by the disruption to the relationships between generations: *“Oh, things just change with time, but mostly because we do not take heed of teachings from elderly people. If my sons do not listen to me or their father, they will not grow up to be good parents...When a clan of people live together in a community they share a lot of things. The way people were moved from the valley, families were separated, family trees destroyed - like here, a lot of these people around us are not even our relatives. So passing on teaching also has to be within clans, you know.” (Trouble)*

Syachilowa believes that formal schooling and westernisation have stopped children being taught how to behave as Tonga. His sadness is evident: *“We have completely stopped [teaching the old ways]. No one is taught anything.... Even if you teach [a child] about the ways and rules of the village he will just leave you alone.... [T]here he goes having learnt nothing and is busy with his friends.... With the schools around us our children have become learned .... And now they are living as though they were white... [having] things their own fathers never had. I suppose they are learning all these things from the books .... They have learnt from the books just like the white people who said ‘no’ to our ways and who said we should live in this way....”*

Sikafulu stresses the role of the Christian Church in the erosion of Tonga values and ways of life: *“Nowadays it's not viewed as important to learn*

*how one's forefathers lived, and to make matters even worse, churches have come along and all we seem to do now is to go to church.... "*

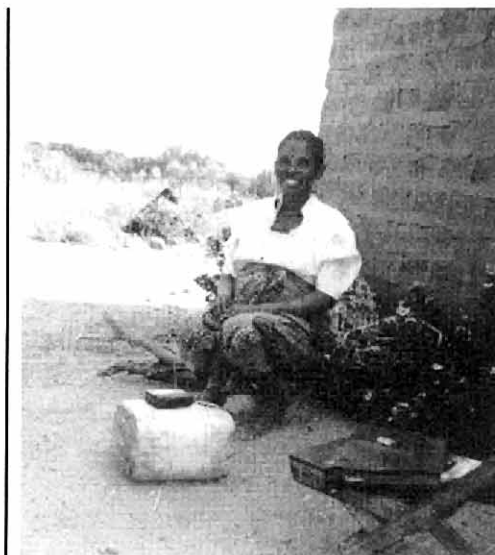
Chief Siachilaba also sees Christianity and the influx of other cultures, rather than just resettlement, as a major force in Tonga cultural change: *"Christianity destroyed our livelihoods and culture. The young generations are all now Christians. They no longer engage in cultural activities that were common before e.g. cultural dances like ngoma **buntibe**, **makuntu**, **chinyaanya**, and arranged marriages. They want to look for their potential wife on their own which is not good because they do not know how these families are.... The resettlement was not the cause of all cultural changes - although it largely contributed to the changes. Although the relocation process made us mixed and stay with the **Ndebele** and **Shona** speakers and this somehow contributed to the changes found in our culture. Changes are also due to modernisation and globalisation, westernisation of African cultures, especially those changes that have to do with Europeans."*

### **"You must know how to read and write"**

Today there are schools in all the major villages in the Tonga area. A narrator explains: *"As for schools, we have enough. All the schools we had at Old Chihepo were rebuilt here. Each village therefore that had a school at Old Chihepo, has one as well here. However, no additional schools were or have since been put up. So far one cannot complain about lack of schools."* (John)

While some narrators regret the loss of traditional culture, all agree that formal education is important. Jairo, a community school teacher, says: *"What I would say on this matter is that the world we are living in now is not like the world our forefathers used to live in. Everything in this day and age hinges on education. Whatever you want to do, certainly you must be literate, be it farming or whatever, you must know how to read and write.... You cannot engage in some meaningful venture without some education of some kind. If you do, you are sure of not succeeding. It is for this reason that life of nowadays certainly requires that people get at least some education.... When I talk to [children] they say that these days things have changed a lot. Even when they go to church, they see that the people who conduct service are people who have been to school. Even people who are in leadership positions are mostly those who went to school. Children say*

**Giveness  
Siamambo  
Zambia, 2001**



*that they, too, would like to be leaders of some sort some day and so they feel they have to acquire education first. They have come to know and learn that it is necessary and important therefore to go to school if good life is to [come] your way."*

Most narrators regret that education has become so costly; many find it difficult to pay school fees. Stanard contrasts the free schooling of the past with education today: *"School requisites were free of charge. We were not paying school boarding.... If it were these days – when students have to pay for school requirements as well as raise transport money to and from school – I would not get as far in education."*

Giveness wishes for fees to be reduced so that more people, especially in the rural areas, could send their children to school: *"During our days of going to school, it was not this expensive. Nowadays if you have two or three school-going children, you certainly cannot manage, more especially us villagers with our poverty. Money is hard to come by, it is just not possible to be able to send two or three or more children to school. When you talk of buying and maintaining school uniforms, the books and pencils, let alone paying the school fees, it is just not possible for most of us.... My main*

concern is if the Government could, somehow, make education for children affordable.... During my time, more children attended school even though we were paying, but the school payments were not as heavy as they are now. After all we used to receive exercise books free of charge. At times all you could be asked to buy was just a pen or pencil....

*"These days fewer children manage to attend school as a result of abject poverty prevailing in villages.... On the other hand, children as a whole very much want to go to school but then there is no money to make it possible.... [Parents] would love to send their children to school because through education a lot of good things can come about in life...[and] if a child goes to and successfully completes school and obtains a good job, this child, in future and if needs be, would be able to look after the parents in their old age."*

One narrator explains the difficulties of finding school fees, especially for girls: *"I am a widowed woman... Paternal relatives...were not willing to assist the girl. As a girl, they said that she was supposed and expected to discontinue school and get married. They said further that there was no benefit a girl could bring to a family by pursuing higher education... When I sat down and reflected over this matter I was saddened but then resolved to do all I could to make sure that my daughter continued with her education. I approached my own relatives who kindly assisted me and also not to mention our parish priest, who helped greatly and I am very thankful for this. This is how this child is managing to go further with her education."* (Mary)

Emely believes that many girls do not attend school up to a high level because this is not considered important by the parents, especially fathers. She wishes for development agencies to further girls' education: *"Education of girls here in Lusitu is something that is far fetched and backwards compared to that of boys. I am saying so because, these men we are married to in these homes by and large do not want girls to be educated. They do not see any need.... Their thinking is that it is a waste of time to take a girl to school due to pregnancy. They would rather, once a girl becomes of age, that she gets married and they get the lobola instead for them to enjoy."*

## **“We never learnt about the resettlement”**

The story of the Tonga people's resettlement is not taught in schools: “...we did not learn [about it]. On this one, I must say I have never found a child [who learned about resettlement in school]... nor reading in a child's history book something to do with the resettlement of the Tonga people from Old Chipeco to here. I have not seen that...” (Jairo)

Giveness believes that teachers should educate children about the resettlement: *“The cardinal point here is the question of teachers who come to teach at this [Lusitu] school. As of now, they come from all over the whole country and consequently these same teachers do not seem to consider the question of teaching the resettlement of the Tonga people from Old Chipeco to here as a necessity. To supplement this crop of teachers, there is therefore a need to get local teachers from Chief Chipeco's area to teach the issue of resettlement. I strongly think that in this way the matter of teaching resettlement, here at Lusitu, could be well addressed.... Children should learn about how their ancestors were resettled. It is necessary because if children only concentrate on learning about the present, then they will lose track.... I feel some Tonga culture should be taught as well.”*

Elizabeth believes that despite the lack of formal teaching about resettlement, the younger Tonga generation do learn about it from elders: *“As of now... children learn about the resettlement in the family. Children sit with their grandparents, around evening fires, and are then given accounts of where their forefathers came from, what kind of life they led at Old Chipeco and what they went through during and after the resettlement. So, this is the only source of learning for the children about the resettlement... most of us learn about it this way and in funeral gatherings when elderly people relate stories of the past. Usually at a funeral, say of an old man, his colleagues get agitated, especially when they dance the war dance with the **budima**. Through songs and lamentations they reveal their past life, how they used to perform the **budima** dance together that time. Some of us learn more about how life was at Old Chipeco in this way.”*

Jairo believes that resettlement should be taught in schools, not least because it reminds people of the sacrifices made by the Tonga for the development of their countries. *“During my school time, we never learnt about the*

**Elizabeth**



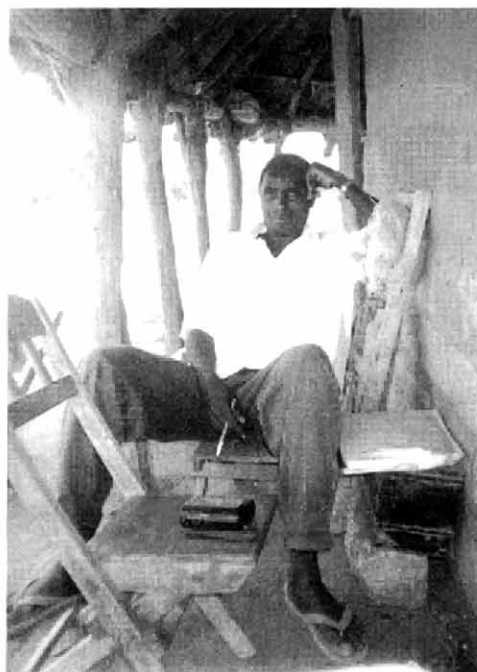
*resettlement of the Tonga people....Imagine, some of these issues, we never learnt about. I thought, that maybe I was going to learn about it in my history classes at secondary level, but that was never to be. So far I have not even come across a book about the resettlement of the Tonga people from Old Chipepo to here. There is nothing at all. I do not know what the hold-up is and the position of Government on this matter....*

*"We learnt and read about, for example, the way the Ngoni people came from South Africa to Zambia. This is something that all the future generations of our friends, the Ngoni, will read and know about, but how about the Tonga people of Chipepo? How will their future generations know how and where they came from? ... My personal view is that the resettlement of the Tonga people from Old Chipepo to here should be taught in schools. I am saying so because the resettlement of these people underpins the development of this country. Some people do not know how the Kariba Dam came about. They do not know who sacrificed what and how much in order to give way for the Dam to be built. There is a need therefore for the future generations*

*of the Tonga people, and the country as a whole, to be well and properly informed on this matter. It is necessary that historical records and facts be properly documented and accounted for on this matter."*

This booklet, and the oral testimony project which generated it, is one initiative which aims to meet some of the need for information on resettlement for "*future generations of the Tonga people, and the country as a whole*".

**Jairo Hachingala,  
Zambia, 2001**





# List of Narrators

## **Zambia narrators:**

Angenes, F  
Elizabeth, F/53  
Emely, F/42  
Giveness, F/37  
Isaac, M/65  
Jairo, M/36  
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Lillian, F/38  
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Maxford, M  
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Sikafulu, M/62  
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## **Zimbabwe narrators:**

Andrew, M/47  
Baron, M/59  
Bbola, M/68  
Chibbinya, M/95  
Chief Siachilaba, M/64  
Cibbami, M/85  
Damion, M/42  
Elizabeth, F  
Elizabeth, F/45+  
Gideon, M/62  
Jingamulonga, F/74  
Magoyela, F/60  
Magoyela, F/70s  
Mpemba, M/72  
Mpolokwa, F/60+  
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Solomi, F/65  
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Tala, M/57  
Wachi, M/43  
Wailesi, M/43

## GLOSSARY

Every attempt has been made to gloss the words in the interviews, but some misinterpretations and omissions may remain.

<b>Bemba</b>	large tribal group in Zambia; language is CiBemba
<b>budima /</b>	dance or ceremony, performed at funerals to bring back the
<b>ngoma</b>	spirits of the dead. Takes place at home of the deceased about
<b>buntibe</b>	one year after burial. Horns and drums are played and in the
	past spears were used in the ceremony. Ngoma ya budima,
	the correct name, is sometimes shortened to budima, and in
	some areas it is known as buntibe.
<b>Bulawayo</b>	second largest town in Zimbabwe, in Matabeleland
<b>busiikka</b>	tamarind
<b>chilimba</b>	dance, usually done during winter evenings, mostly for young
	girls and boys and some older men who teach the boys how
	to play the drums
<b>CiNgoni</b>	language of the Ngoni people
<b>chinyaanya</b>	dance involving women, and a few men who drum; the
	women have rattles on their ankles and bangles on their arms
	which make harmonious sounds. Chinyaanya came originally
	from the Shona culture.
<b>cijoolo</b>	a disease similar to leprosy
<b>clan</b>	Tonga society is organised into groups called clans. Clan
	membership is traced through the female line; each matrilineal
	group has a single body of ancestral spirits.
<b>Gokwe</b>	large town in Gokwe North District, about 250 km from
	Binga, Zimbabwe
<b>incelela</b>	small plots of land along the river where the Tonga grew
	food
<b>kampyoompyo</b>	"Kaffir corn", the name given by white farmers to millet
<b>lobola</b>	bride wealth or price (given to girl's parents)
<b>Luvale</b>	tribal group who migrated to Tonga area; term also used for
	the language
<b>makuntu</b>	a Tonga spirit dance or ceremony, which includes the gathering
	of ngoma buntibe from different villages
<b>malende</b>	shrines, eg trees, natural pools or rivers, used in the rainmaking
	ceremony

<b><i>masabe</i></b>	Tonga dance ceremony (includes the beating of drums), performed if someone is sick or believed to be possessed by evil spirits, in order to cast them out; also the name for evil spirits
<b><i>mazubo</i></b>	large baskets placed in the river to catch fish
<b><i>mealie meal</i></b>	flour made from ground maize
<b><i>mibbiadwa</i></b>	cloth material worn by men around waist and between the legs
<b><i>mpande</i></b>	rainmaking ceremony performed by a rainmaker around a shrine, malende, to appease the spirits, which are also called mpande
<b><i>nchili</i></b>	pestle for pounding grain or corn
<b><i>Ndebele</i></b>	second largest tribal group in Zimbabwe; language is CiNdebele
<b><i>ng'anga</i></b>	
<b><i>ngoma (ya)</i></b>	traditional healer, diviner
<b><i>buntibe</i></b>	local name for budime dance or ceremony
<b><i>nsuku</i></b>	headdress with feathers, also known as choba
<b><i>ntilani</i></b>	beads worn around the wrists for decoration, especially by women
<b><i>Nyanja</i></b>	tribal group in Zambia; also means the Nyanja language
<b><i>Nyasalands</i></b>	people from Malawi, which was called Nyasaland during the colonial era
<b><i>nyeele</i></b>	refers to the horn blowers in the dance of the same name; and to the horns themselves. There about 19 different sizes of horn fashioned from different species of antelope.
<b><i>Shona</i></b>	largest tribal group in Zimbabwe; CiShona is the language
<b><i>Sikanyana</i></b>	Tonga nickname for the District Commissioner of Gokwe, stationed during the time of resettlement in the Tonga area of South Rhodesia
<b><i>SiLozi</i></b>	language of the Lozi people
<b><i>Wankie</i></b>	Hwange, a coal mining town in Zimbabwe, not far from Binga