

# BEE THE SOLUTION

## 1 year in “the office” - Celebrating our 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary

By Chrystel Vert-Pré

We launched “Bee the Solution” website on 13<sup>th</sup> Sep 2016, as a way of launching the NGO.

Today, I am thinking: “Is it really 1 year ago?”

I am sitting at the same place. Doing the same thing (working on the website...). Was it one year ago or yesterday? What happened during that time? Where did the year go?

While I am sitting today in my Zambian office, the same than for the launch, this is only one of my offices in Zambia. And in Africa.

[Maya](#) is a mobile office and it is just interesting that we are closing the year in the same place. In a way, we are closing a loop.

Reflecting on the past year, I can see that we have been busy, we have moved around a little, met new people, saw old friends, made progress on projects.

I was not sure how to speak about the year in a short way - I always talk too much when I am passionate about something. And the passion is still there.

So trying to summarise the different aspect of the year so that I can share some of it with you.

### The different projects that we focused on this year

We have been to Kariba in [Zimbabwe](#), (re)starting collection of information about the Kapenta fishermen. We are looking at the feasibility of changing the current lighting system they are using from diesel-generator to solar system on the fishing rig. A lot of the data we had was lost when our computer was stolen and we had to start afresh. We are working on two fronts: explaining the idea to more fishermen and gathering their interest but also looking at low energy lights that would deliver the same light (not just in term of power, but also colour temperature, which is critical in the fishing technique). We have also done some cooking and started to look at a new project.

Returning to [Namibia](#), we have mainly been to Bushmanland. It is quite a busy place for us and we have a few things going on there. Amongst it, we have spent time with the children in one village and we are now trying to organise some out-of-school activities. We taught our bread-making, cooked without an oven, in a couple of places. We came back to check on a small business. We spent time on the Youth Centre and the Rest Camp. We met new people and are looking into different small-scale farming in the area. So, more projects are coming in this region.

Back in [Zambia](#), we went to visit our friend [Paula](#) in Mwandu, building houses for orphans, which was a delight as always. We were also very happy that the photography is going well and truly responding to a need in the community. We bake some more bread. We also added a new project to our pipeline.

Along the way, we have also done a few little things to help around and gave some motivational talks on the road. We have talked a lot about Bee the Solution, to old or new friends, sharing our passion for what our vision is. We have discussed a lot with friends in the field as well, gaining new knowledge and getting more inspiration. And one of the best thing, as always, was to meet friends when we can.

More details on the projects will be added to the [website](#) throughout the year.

<p><b>The year in numbers</b></p> <p>2 constitutions drafted</p> <p>8 countries - travelling/living in 5 countries in Africa and 3 in Europe</p> <p>10 days: shortest time spent in one country</p> <p>12 main projects we have worked on this year</p> <p>1 month: longest time spent continuously in one place</p> <p>3 months: longest time spent in one country</p> <p>150+ articles posted, either in the newsletters or the project presentations</p> <p>15'000 km in Africa... "only"</p> <p>Countless people we have met, "old" or new through the projects and/or on the road</p>	<p><b>Behind the scene</b></p> <p>Meeting new people</p> <p>Meeting old friends</p> <p>Listening and absorbing new knowledge</p> <p>Learning new tricks</p> <p>Talking, talking, talking</p> <p>New passport</p> <p>New international driving licence</p> <p>Small repairs and improvement on the car</p> <p>Improvement of the website</p> <p>New format of the <a href="#">newsletter</a> since February</p> <p>Writing, writing, writing</p>
<p><b>Plans for the coming year?</b></p> <p>Continue to go to those communities we have started to work with and advance in those projects. Meet with a couple of new people and discuss possible future projects together.</p> <p>We are finally on our way back to Malawi and Tanzania where we could not go a year ago. This was because we had to get a new passport, the previous one was full after 4 years on the continent. We hope that we will be able to advance on the projects we had been discussing previously.</p> <p>We will be going back to those projects in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Namibia. All of them have their different challenges and we hope that we will continue to see them growing.</p> <p>And behind the scene, we will continue to work on improving the website and will hopefully find a better balance on posting articles.</p>	

It has been a fully packed year, still bringing us new learning and new friends. Thank you to all for your support and interest in our projects.

We are looking forward to an even busier year ahead, full of people and projects. We hope that you will continue to follow us and support us in the upcoming year.

Have a great day  
 Chrystel (Maya), Odile, Jean-Louis and Hélène.

**Zambia, 13 Sep 2017**