

# Bee the Solution - Newsletter 2, November 2016

By Chrystel Vert-Pré



Local Artwork: Wooden Kapenta Fishing Rig (Chawara Harbour, Kariba, Zimbabwe).

Includes many details, and more importantly to see, the details of the lights used for the fishing (close-up picture on the right)

## PROJECTS DETAILS

More details on Projects are available on Bee the Solution website @ [www.projects.beethesolution.org](http://www.projects.beethesolution.org)

Find the latest posts on [Gabby](#), [Eino](#), [Kakuyu](#) and [the Kapenta Fishing project](#). And feel free to read previous posts.



Also browse the website [www.beethesolution.org](http://www.beethesolution.org) for more information.

## WHAT HAPPENED THIS MONTH

Doing the projects is not just about the projects. It does have a lot of different ramifications and this is about those side-activities, behind the scene, along with issues and challenges that we encounter in doing projects.

As one person on the ground, and doing 99% of the running around, writing updates, travelling, meeting with people, activities for the projects themselves, this does take quite a chunk of the time in the month. Projects involve thinking the steps, writing for the projects, writing about the projects, meeting people for the project, making connections, discussing, keeping ears opened on the ground. The newsletter is about all of these activities, what does have an impact on setting-up and/or running projects and also bring general information on project conduct.

## Eco-Fishing Project, Kariba, Zimbabwe

Spending more time in Kariba this month, we have been busy collecting data and enrolling people into making the project on the ground. People are interested in the idea and keen to see one rig set-up with a solar system so that they can see if they are willing to commit to buy one.

We met with a few fishermen to collect basic information and gauge the interest. The frame of mind at the moment is fairly difficult in Zimbabwe as the economy is sliding, but also for the fishermen specifically in Kariba as the catches are getting smaller every year while fixed costs remain the same. Thus surviving is getting more and more difficult for the fishermen and their debts are increasing.

### Economic challenges - 1

As the country is facing a big economic slow down, one of the issues in Zimbabwe is the lack of cash... literally... not just that people might have less money (buying power), but the fact that it is difficult to get actual cash. The withdrawals at the ATM are limited (initially to 100 USD, then 50 USD, now 20 USD in some place already), and that is when there is money available at the bank...

You do know when there is money available at the ATM because of the long queue. You are not sure though that after queuing for 2 hours in the sun you will still be able to get money... 90 people in the queue, 70 people served...

It does impact all, people and business alike, and has had made me worried on how I would pay for my necessities here. Thankfully I managed to make it, just about: like many others, I had been hunting down people doing their shopping and paying cash - I then paid with my card and get their cash. But one has to be wise and watch carefully as even this is getting difficult to do (and illegal...)...

(more on Zimbabwe cash situation @ [www.mayandmeinafrica.wordpress.com](http://www.mayandmeinafrica.wordpress.com))



**Alex** has been a star in collecting data for the Eco-Fishing project. He has interviewed 6 fishermen and collected data and feedback.

This covers over 40 rigs in the area as each fisherman he talked to own more than 1 boat. He will hopefully continue to help once we are not in Kariba.

**Laiton** is another of my star in Kariba. He is a source of knowledge about the area, lended me books about Kariba and fishing, knows a lot of people and will be the liaison with Mabasa for computer related communications.



You can read a little more about Alex and Laiton directly on the projects website at [www.projects.beethesolution.org](http://www.projects.beethesolution.org)

### Weather challenges

While it might seem trivial, and a repeat from the last newsletter, the weather has been a real slow down in my plans in Kariba. The heat impacts everyone, and maybe foreigner even more. Life has been very slow for all, everyone feeling drained most days by the heat. The bad sleep at night also leads to being even more tired during the day but unable to sleep due to the heat. And it has been the way for the whole of the 6 weeks here.

The heat and drought also means that boats are sometimes harboured at different places. Travelling to meet people around has been difficult and I did not meet as many as I wanted. Thankfully, the guys on the ground will get the information to me. But these conditions are also impacting the fishing as it is too hot and the fish are staying in deep waters, reducing the catch and thus the local economy (already at risk, see "economical challenges - 1" above).

The heat is impacting all electronic devices as well, computer and phone, making it more difficult to work and communicate. And I have also been fighting dehydration, having trouble to think straight at times and I have been sick for the first time in years - which I put on the account of the weather...

## Economic challenges - 2

Another impact of the current economy in Zimbabwe is the occasional lack of fuel. While it does have an impact on every aspects of local life, including the autonomy of the boats and lights for fishing, I also had to be careful with my driving in the area to meet fishermen as there is little fuel and I have to cross the country. I needed to make sure I could do so safely. No-one could predict when and where fuel would be available (which is when you also have the cash available to buy it!). Despite it all, I still drove 350 km in the month, around the 13 km stretch that I am covering. But I could re-fuel and pay for it before hitting the road.



## New project - Computer classes, Zimbabwe



**Hector** asked me if we could discuss about his project of free computer classes in Nyamhunga, an area of Kariba. He is one of the few teckie in town and want to help people in the community. We are now discussing the ins and outs of the project and will be shortly drafting it. More on this in the near future...

He will also provide some technical support to the Eco-Fishing project on the ground.

## FEEDBACK

Please do not hesitate to contact us @ [info@beethesolution.org](mailto:info@beethesolution.org).

Feel free to send us feedback. We are open to suggestions and comments. As we are young and learning, we value your opinion even more than usual and are very grateful for it.

Let us know about what you want to see in the Newsletter, which projects you are interested in, any ideas you have for a project.

Have a safe month ahead

Chrystel, (Maya), Odile, H el ene and Jean-Louis