

## Newsletter No.7 – June 2019

Dear Members and Volunteers,

Dear Donors, and Sympathizers of the Support Association to the Mubaya Ecovillage,

The development of the ecovillage is progressing well despite the drought, which has a significant impact on harvesting and water supply (page 1). Mike Mubaya can now count on the involvement of neighbouring farms and the tireless support of four of their residents who participated in the training sessions funded by our association in 2018 (page 2). Malvin Meda, one of the four, reports on page 2 on his progress in permaculture.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter!

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### News from Zimbabwe

#### A season 2018/2019 marked by dryness

***Zimbabwe has been facing a very severe drought for the second consecutive year. The agricultural yields of the village of Mubaya have not been spared.***

The first rains only fell in January this year, while the rainy season in Zimbabwe usually begins at the end of October. Apart from being too late, precipitation has proved too sporadic to replenish rivers, reservoirs and streams. It is estimated that at least 30% of Zimbabwe's rural population are affected by hunger and thirst.



The maize fields in the village of Mubaya were largely destroyed by the drought.

Mike Mubaya is concerned. He estimates that the harvest in the village of Mubaya this year will only be about 15% compared to an average year. The January rains could only fill the water reservoirs for a short time. The inhabitants of the demonstration and training centre

of the Mubaya Ecovillage fortunately have other food sources because of their permaculture activities. Thanks to the water storage built in previous years, some of their vegetable gardens have been preserved.

Drought problems are accompanied by rising food prices and supply bottlenecks due to the economic crisis. Following the devastation caused by Cyclone Idai in eastern Zimbabwe in March of this year, the government had to mobilize foreign donor assistance to deal with the consequences of the drought among other concerns. Further information can be found on the websites of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the NGO Action against Famine, which have been active in the country for several years (links below).

**UNICEF in Zimbabwe**

Click [here](#)

**Action Against Hunger**

Click [here](#)

**Read more about the economical situation:**

The Zimbabwe Independent, "Mthuli Ncube's dramatic new currency flip-flops" (June 30<sup>th</sup>): Click [here](#)

## The ecovillage project is progressing despite the difficulties

*The training courses financed by our association in 2018 enable the inhabitants of the ecovillage to plan new projects to cope with natural risks by establishing new collaborative networks with the neighbouring farms.*



The inhabitants of the ecovillage want to build fishponds in order to diversify their food sources and income.

Cooperation is the basis for success. Mike Mubaya knows that he can now count on the active support of four farmers to transform his village into an ecovillage by 2020, in line with the vision determined in 2016 (link below). Cathrine Mubaya, Malvin Meda, Davison Mubaya and Samuel Meda were trained in permaculture in July 2018, as reported in our previous newsletter (link at end of article). This circle will be extended in 2019, as the organization PORET invited four more residents for the next Permacultural design (PDC) course in July in the Chimanimani region. However, in view of the major damage caused by Cyclone Idai in this eastern region of Zimbabwe last March, the implementation of this training

course is uncertain.

The transformation of the village into an ecovillage can only be possible if the inhabitants of Mubaya are made aware of the advantages of permaculture. As a reminder, more than twenty farmers from sixteen farms near the ecovillage took part in a workshop organized in October 2018. At the end of the reflection process it became clear to the participants that water management is an important issue for the village of Mubaya. They decided to pool their resources and efforts to dig water retention basins and fishponds in the coming months. As this requires considerable resources and special skills, the association decided to seek external expertise and external funds.

The participation process initiated by the workshop in October 2018 also aims to develop a master plan. The development of this programme is intended to encourage the people of Mubaya to better coordinate their efforts to cope with droughts or other natural disasters, which are likely to increase as climate change intensifies in Zimbabwe.

In addition, two agronomy students from the Zimbabwean University of Bindura will shortly complete a six-month internship in the ecovillage to work with residents on methods of soil improvement and food production.

### Read more about it:

Newsletter No. 6, articles on the training courses followed by inhabitants (read on pages 1 and 2): Click [here](#)

Vision 2016-2020 of the Mubaya Ecovillage: Click [here](#)

## Field report by Malvin Meda

**Malvin Meda, a long-time friend of Mike Mubaya's, decided to expand his knowledge of permaculture after being impressed with Mike's results. He gives us his account of the impact of this training on his work in the field.**



Malvin Meda

*Mike encouraged me to attend permaculture design training in July 2018. I was very happy to have been chosen because I would be able to diversify my agricultural activities.*

*I learned a lot in the two weeks of my training. I didn't know that I could improve the yields of my fields without fertilizers or other chemicals. I was taught how to breed goats, sheep and chickens using permaculture methods. I also appreciated the opportunity to meet people from all over the country.*

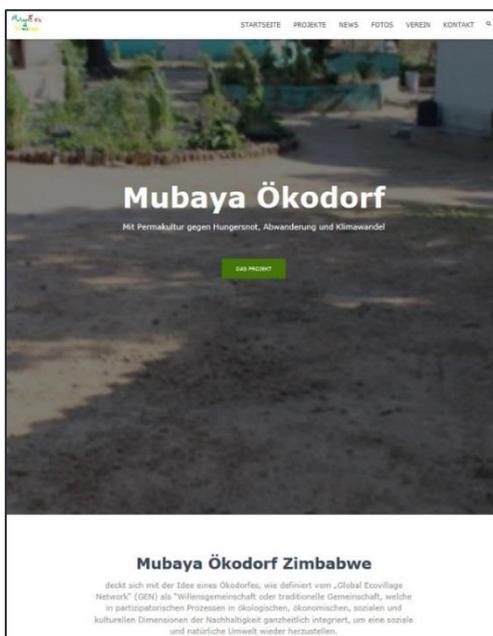
*After the training I helped my friends to build fences to protect our gardens from animals. I am very grateful to your association for helping me because I use what I have learned every day. I am motivated to continue my education when the opportunity arises in the future*

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## News from Switzerland

### Search for a new volunteer webmaster

**Anyone who is interested in managing the website of our association is welcome!**



The creation of the association's website in three languages has employed several members of the association and volunteers in recent months. The webmaster plays a decisive role in the integration of content with Wordpress. In addition, there is the task of periodically uploading the content produced by members of the association to the website and Facebook page.

If you are interested in the activities of our association and already have websites professionally or privately maintained, we would be very pleased to hear from you at the following address:

→ [contact@mubayaecovillagezimbabwe.org](mailto:contact@mubayaecovillagezimbabwe.org)

## Journey to Zimbabwe in 2020

***Members and sympathizers of our association will have the opportunity to visit the ecovillage of Mubaya and Zimbabwe next April.***

The aim of this trip is to meet the inhabitants of the ecovillage and to celebrate the progress of the last five years with them. Participants will have the opportunity to visit the projects and deepen their knowledge of permaculture.

Sixteen people have already expressed their interest, so the maximum number has been reached for now. After the visit of the ecovillage participants have the opportunity to visit other places in Zimbabwe like the Victoria Falls or the Hwange National Park.

The itinerary takes into account, as much as possible, the interests expressed by the participants: visiting the nearby school and medical facilities, and also meeting with local professionals and figures. Social activities and workshops with Mubaya's inhabitants are also planned.

Depending on developments in Zimbabwe, however, it will not be possible to confirm the trip until early 2020.

Marie Bousseau and Auxilia Mubaya are our contact persons. Marie is responsible for the organization of the trip from Switzerland and Auxilia coordinates activities on site.

### **Read more about it:**

Provisional programme of the journey: Click [here](#) (only available in French)



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## **New member**

***The association is pleased to announce the election of Patrick Leu to the association board.***

Patrick has many years of experience in development cooperation, especially on the African continent and in vocational training.

With his skills in project conception, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, he will provide valuable support to the committee.



Patrick Leu

# Events

## Flea markets in Biel/Bienne

**Saturday | 08:00-12:00**

**In the old town**

***Ringplatz***

**Next dates**

July 6<sup>th</sup> | August 3<sup>rd</sup> |  
August 31<sup>th</sup> | September 29<sup>th</sup>

**Saturday | 08:00-12:00**

**In front of the Kongresshaus**

***Esplanade***

**Next dates**

July 20<sup>th</sup> | August 17<sup>th</sup> |  
September 14<sup>th</sup> | October 12<sup>th</sup>

## Flea market in Port

**Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> | 08:00-18:00**

**Portissimo**

Village square, Port (Switzerland)

## Advent Art market

**Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup> | 18:00-21:00**

**Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup> | 10:00-16:00**

**Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> | 10:00-16:00**

**Atelier Gina Bay**

Schützenmattweg 4, Nidau (Switzerland)

**Thank you for your interest and support in the ecovillage of Mubaya!**



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