

PRESS RELEASE

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Zambian President Banda meets Cecily's Fund, discusses education for orphans

On September 26th Zambian President, Rupiah Banda, met with Cecily's Fund's US representative, Sue Skaf, in New York. They discussed the work of Cecily's Fund in supporting the education of nearly 10,000 vulnerable children and young people in school and college. Cecily's Fund is the largest non-governmental facilitator of education in Zambia. The President said "Thank you so much for all you are doing in Zambia, we greatly appreciate it. Please thank Cecily's parents on my behalf."

He was very interested in the concept of encouraging the private sector to give jobs to our school leavers. Cecily's Fund will stay in touch with the President's office in Zambia to build on this meeting and work with them to help ensure that orphans have the best possible opportunities for education and beyond.

The Hon. Kapembwa Simbao, MP - Minister of Health was also present at the meeting and was interested to hear about Cecily's Fund's peer health education programme in which young people are trained to run workshops for school children on how to stay safe from HIV. The programme is managed by Paul Kasoka of the Copperbelt Health Education Project. Paul, an orphan himself, was supported by Cecily's Fund through school and as a peer health educator.

Notes for editors:

Photos available.

HIV has hit Zambia harder than almost anywhere else in the world. Already, one in five of all Zambian children are orphans and tens of thousands have been pushed into extreme poverty by the disease. HIV mainly affects adults, many of whom are parents. Many teachers have also been lost, are sick, or are frequently absent for funerals or to care for sick relatives.

With funds raised by supporters in the UK, Switzerland and the USA, and working with local partner organisations, Cecily's Fund is currently supporting almost 10,000 children in primary and secondary school. They also fund 35 young people to train as

teachers and 50 a year as peer health educators to help teach other children about HIV and children's rights.

What makes Cecily's Fund different? Cecily's Fund is a small, efficient, family-based organisation with just six staff and a very active board of trustees. Once they start supporting a child, they commit to continuing that support right through his or her education. They conduct regular monitoring visits to ensure donors' money is being spent effectively and they publish an annual report and accounts. They won an Institute of Chartered Accountants' award for their Online Accounts in 2009.

Cecily's Fund is a UK Registered Charity number 1071660.

For more information please visit www.cecilysfund.org or contact us direct.

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