



Case Study:

“A Day in the Life of Darlington Muchiali”



Name: *Darlington Muchiali*

Age: 11

Grade: 7

Darlington Muchali is in Grade 7 at school in a rural part of Kalomo District in the Southern Province of Zambia.

Living Arrangements:

Darlington lives with his parents and his brother and four sisters in a hut that is located about 1.5km from school, across the other side of a dam. In Zambian terms, this means he lives very close to the school. All of his sisters and his brother attend school too.

His father works as a mechanic on a local farm and his Mother takes care of the home and her 6 children.

Daily Life:

Classes take place from 7am to 1.30pm and include Tonga (the local language spoken in Kalomo), Civics, Science, English and Mathematics.



***L: Darlington in front of the blackboard during a science class;
R: Darlington outside his classroom.***

Darlington leaves his family hut every morning at 6am and returns home at 2pm. He does not eat breakfast before going to school and he must wait until he returns home after lessons for his first food of the day. He says he does not feel hungry at school any more because he is used to not eating before attending classes.

When he returns to his home he eats lunch prepared by his Mother. His favourite meal is Nshima with tomato sauce. Nshima is the staple Zambian dish and is made from ground maize flour which water is added to so it becomes a porridge like mixture which is then stirred to make a thick paste.

Behaviour:

Darlington commented that whilst behaviour in the classroom is generally good as discipline is quite strict, there are some “noise-makers” in the class who try to disrupt things. Their names are written down in a Bad Behaviour book and may sometimes lead to detention. Darlington said that he does not like it when people misbehave!

Break Time:

Like all pupils, Darlington looks forward to break time when he can play with his friends. It is also an opportunity to drink the “chibwantu” that he brings with him each day - this is a traditional Zambian fermented drink made with crushed maize and tree roots that is very filling.

Since it is hot much of the year in Zambia, the children like to play under the trees to keep cool, and in the rainy season this also stops them from getting so wet!



A glass of Chibwantu

Favourite Subject:

Darlington's favourite subject is English. He said that in Zambia it is vital to be able to speak and write good English in order to be able to get the best jobs because it is the official language of the country. There are 73 tribal languages throughout the whole of Zambia and so people from different tribes have to use English in order to be able to communicate. English is also often used as the main language of teaching at all High Schools, and so it is important to have a good understanding of it.

Darlington said that his Father speaks good English and so he has learnt a little bit from him, but that his Mother speaks only Tonga and so is unable to help him with much of his school work or with reading and writing.

Spare Time:

Darlington enjoys reading very much. Sadly he does not have access to any books at home because his parents do not think they are important. He would like to be able to read at weekends and in the evenings but because he has no books there, he has to wait until he is at school where they have lots of books that they are able to read - some of them came from schools in the UK who no longer needed them.



Books at African Revival School

The Future:

If he does well in his exams he will go on to High School in Kalomo Town. From his home, he will have to firstly walk 10km down the dirt track to reach the tarmac road, from where he will have to get a bus 30km into town. Darlington is very keen to make it to High School and complete his education up to Grade 12 (the final year). He said that in the future he would like to become a teacher himself so that he can help to educate other Zambians.