

## Update on Mothers' Union in Zimbabwe

It is a wonderful feeling to finally, after years of great suffering and bad news, to be able to bring positive feedback from Zimbabwe, a country that has been at the forefront of our prayers for so long.

In recent months we have heard horrendous stories of violence, starvation, cholera outbreaks, murder, empty hospitals, closed schools, unemployment, mass uprooting of people along with extreme poverty and collapse of the entire economy, **but what we did not hear is this:**

During this time, with all the suffering and violence around, Mothers' Union members of Zimbabwe did not disintegrate and collapse, rather, it strengthened. Mothers' Union became a really strong group, growing in faith and hope -an incredible sign of God's love.

Albertina, Mothers' Union President of Masvingo says: *"it was indeed a difficult year, but Mothers' Union members throughout the diocese did not loose heart. Prayers, working together, comforting each other and offering the little help we could, kept us going... Mothers' Union is a backbone of all our churches. Wherever one goes, one is welcomed by women in blue and white blouses and black skirts singing and dancing to music accompanied by drums"*



The Archbishops' appeal for Zimbabwe was launched in February this year. Only three months later, the fund has already exceeded £300,000.

Mothers' Union, Zimbabwe are to play a vital part in the distribution of this aid.

The very first job has been to establish food distribution centres in schools. Money

was also used to buy drugs, gloves and other medical supplies to stock empty clinics. To assist with longer rehabilitation programmes, Mothers' Union members and workers have received training in counselling, sustainable agricultural techniques and water purification methods. These members will, in turn, pass on their training to others, ensuring information reaches people at community level.

Two main areas of outreach will be to deliver much needed health care (both mental and physical) and re-introducing agricultural techniques and process into a county that used to



be one of Africa's major food providers but is now riddled with starvation.

The Anglican Church and Mothers' Union are working with a Zimbabwean organisation called **"Farming God's Way"**. Farmers are trained to do each step to a very high standard, on time and with minimal wastage with the aim to change sustainable farming into profitable farming.

Things have also been moving forwards with the Mothers' Union in the country.

We have new workers in the diocese of Masvingo, Mataberland and Harare who we hope will be the start of real progress and a new beginning for the organisation in Zimbabwe.