

**New charity, LearnAsOne, offers you the chance to meet an African community in need of a school via Twitter and its website.**

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From 11 May 2009, new educational charity, **LearnAsOne**, will be reporting live from its first community school project in Zambia. It plans to use cheap online tools such as Twitter and a photo-led blog to give donors unprecedented, ongoing access to its projects and show them exactly how their money will be spent.

The LearnAsOne team, led by founder Steve Heyes, will take its supporters and donors on a virtual journey to meet a rural community in Zambia which needs a school, and show them exactly how they can help facilitate education in this particular community. Using its website ([www.learnasone.org](http://www.learnasone.org)) and Twitter, LearnAsOne will post stories and photos from the community throughout their trip, along with a breakdown of the costs to build, equip and run the school. They will also offer visitors to the website the chance to ask questions to members of the community, and let them answer in their own words.

The community will then be provided with a Flip video camera ([www.flipvideo.co.uk](http://www.flipvideo.co.uk)), to document and post regular reports on their progress after the LearnAsOne team returns home. This will allow the charity to respond to the developing needs of the community, and means that donors can really see their money in action. LearnAsOne will work closely with a partner NGO to maintain the project over the long-term.

LearnAsOne hopes that by operating in this manner, it will give African communities a voice to tell donors what they really need, as opposed to what someone thousands of miles away thinks they want. It could be classrooms, clean water and sanitation, or teacher training. Whatever the real need, the community will communicate this to its supporters.

Founder Steve Heyes states: "It's incredible to think that we can sit in a village with Zambian schoolchildren, who don't even have a proper classroom or books, and instigate a conversation between them and the people in the developed world who want to help. We can take anyone who follows us on twitter and through our website on an incredible journey, live, to listen to some of the most interesting and moving stories on the planet, and show them first hand how their money can give people a way to lift themselves out of poverty.

"We believe our success will lie in the desire for people wanting to be able to interact with the community they are helping and see the direct action and results that their support enables. Following our trip to Zambia, our long-term goal is to establish a model which can be replicated in other developing countries with similar needs."

LearnAsOne will be visiting communities from May 11-22, 2009. They will be visiting villages 10-25km away from the small town of Kalomo, which is approximately 75km north of Livingstone and Victoria Falls.

[http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=s\\_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Kalomo&sll=53.800651,-4.064941&sspn=23.806987,37.661133&ie=UTF8&t=h&z=14&iwloc=A](http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Kalomo&sll=53.800651,-4.064941&sspn=23.806987,37.661133&ie=UTF8&t=h&z=14&iwloc=A)

To follow the success of LearnAsOne or donate directly, please visit: [www.learnasone.org](http://www.learnasone.org)

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Please note to minimise expenditure LearnAsOne only have one member of staff (Steve). If you cannot get through to Steve on the phone please send a quick email or tweet with your contact details and he will get back to you as soon as he can. Steve departs for Zambia on 3 May.

**Notes to Editors:****About LearnAsOne**

LearnAsOne is a non-profit organisation based in the UK dedicated to funding schools in Africa. By using simple online tools for organising volunteers and fundraising, LearnAsOne reduces operation overheads to the bare minimum. At the same time, the same simple technologies offer donors unprecedented levels of access to its work and shows them exactly how their money is spent.

Our aim is to provide donors with a way to help communities gain the skills they need to fight their own way out of poverty. Key to LearnAsOne's philosophy is that as much of our money as possible should be spent within a community, for example: training local builders rather than flying in volunteer teams to help with projects.

**About Zambia**

Although the central government is committed to offering universal access to education, over half a million children of primary school age in Zambia are unable to go to school. Many of these are orphans, whose parents are victims of AIDS. Like most sub-Saharan nations, Zambia's citizens are economically worse off than they were 20 years ago.

**Quick facts:**

Population: 11.9 million

Population under the age of 15: 45%

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: 15.2%

Adult literacy rate: 68%

Children attending school: Although almost 90% of children in Zambia are enrolled in primary school, only between 55-58% are thought to attend regularly.

*Figures from Unicef ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)), The World Factbook ([www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)) and the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009 ([www.unesco.org/education/efa](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa)).*