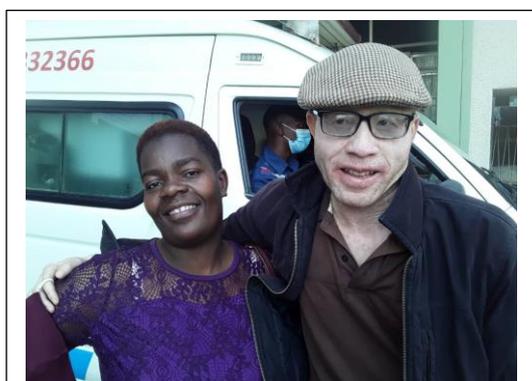


NEWSLETTER 1 - A FUTURE FOR FARAI

11 October 2020

Friends and supporters,

Thank you so much for your support of Dr Farai Maunganidze's journey to survive **colorectal cancer**. Without your well-wishes and financial support Farai would not have been able to embark on treatment nor would he have been emotionally able to face his diagnosis. Cath and I, together with Farai and his family, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Furthermore, what has been incredible to witness is the way in which the **BackABuddy Campaign** and your support has generated collaboration from so many other quarters. Without doubt the saying "from small beginnings come great things" has never been so true.



Farai and his wife Vimba - the start of his health journey. (14 August 2020)

GROUNDSWELL OF SUPPORT

Farai's students (former and current) have mobilised to collect funds from amongst themselves, colleagues at the Great Zimbabwe University, as well as, Farai's relatives, friends and associates. This initiative is led by Francis Gwaindepi, Farai's friend and former student, assisted by Francisca Kutsaranga Katuruza, another former student. Zimbabweans, despite the economic challenges, have contributed so generously in many ways.

It has been heart-warming to receive support from Zimbabwean expats in both the UK and Mozambique. We

know of two UK-based crowd-funding initiatives (through *GoFundMe*), one organised by Shami and Michael Sithole, and the other by Thokozani Chiwara a former classmate of Farai's. Another fundraising initiative is organised by a group of Zimbabweans working in Mozambique. Farai has also been supported by the 'Ladies of the UK'; a group of UK-based Zimbabwean women who raise funds to support Zimbabweans 'back-home'. Upon hearing of Farai's plight they decided to contribute (US\$2,302) towards his treatment.

Most welcome support has come from the Zimbabwean government through the Department of Social Welfare. They pledge to support Zimbabweans living-with-disabilities and as Farai lives with albinism they undertook to assist him. They paid the surgeon's account (an equivalent of US\$ 1,170) as well as for the chemotherapy-radiation machines at Parirenyatwa Hospital (an equivalent of US\$1,185).

And lastly we have to thank Farai's medical team - Dr A. Reid, Dr G. Chatora (radiologist), Dr A. Maungandize (surgeon); Dr M. Mapfayangira (anaesthetist) and Dr P. Mba (oncologist). They have provided such brilliant care and support to Farai. All of them have consulted pro-bono and where possible have discounted their services. They truly embody the Hippocratic Oath.



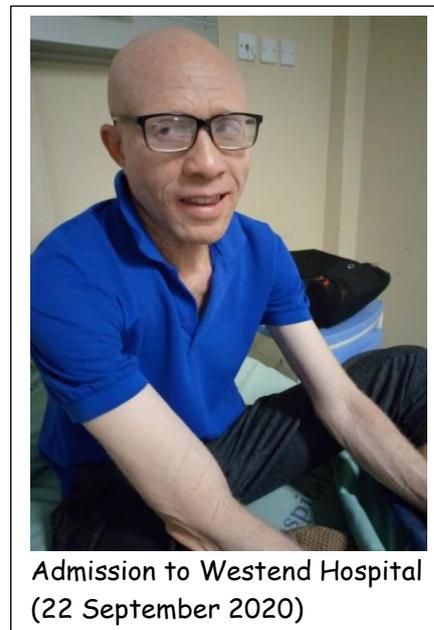
Vimbai, Farai & Francis waiting to see Dr Mba (5 October 2020)

TREATMENT JOURNEY

Firstly a full set of diagnostic tests was needed in order to ascertain the precise medical situation - as it was almost a year since Farai had his biopsy and received the initial diagnosis.

On 22 September Farai was admitted to Westend Hospital in Harare where Dr Maungandize successfully performed a Diverting Colostomy. This was necessary to ensure that there would be no obstruction of the bowel during further treatment. This past week Farai has consulted with both Dr Maungandize and Dr Mba who are very satisfied with his post-op progress.

On the 12 October Farai will go to Parienyatwa Hospital in Harare for a radiotherapy planning CT Scan. This will enable Dr Mba to indicate when the chemo-radiotherapy treatment will start; it will be followed by other necessary tests. Once the chemo-radiotherapy treatment begins Farai will need weekly blood tests to monitor his blood count. It is expected that the chemo-radiotherapy will last five weeks.



If all goes well Farai could have the surgery to remove the tumour sometime in December.

FUNDRAISING THROUGH BACKABUDDY

The support from all who have donated through **BackABuddy** has been awe-inspiring. To date R88,298.61 has been donated. Contributions are from all over the world; from Australia to the USA, from Canada to Britain and from so many South Africans. Each amount, no matter how small, has assisted in getting Farai this far. With your donations have come warm messages of support. These have meant so much to Farai and his family and carried him through the darkest days.

Initially we set a fund-raising target of R200,000 - being uncertain how much the treatment would eventually cost. Your donations, as well as, the support received from other quarters have made us confident of reaching our target and being able to pay for all the treatment required. But as you all know **cancer treatment is expensive** and costs can be unpredictable depending upon outcomes.

So far we have paid for all the initial diagnostic tests, the colostomy (surgery, anaesthetist, hospital costs and drugs) as well as the chemo-radiotherapy. Outstanding is the surgery to remove the tumour (after chemotherapy) and thereafter more chemotherapy. We estimate that a total of US\$6,568 (R118,224) has been spent to cover medical costs thus far. While we still have 'money in the bank', it is insufficient. Our estimation is that we are short of R70,000. And so we continue to ask for your support <https://www.backabuddy.co.za/champion/project/farai-maungandize> .

We also ask that you keep Farai, Vimbai and their three daughters in your thoughts and prayers.

Warmest wishes,
Debby and Cath

To receive regular updates please follow "*A future for Farai*" on FB and Instagram.