



CHIEF MUKUNI'S VILLAGE

The village is home to the Leya people, or Tokaleya as they are now call themselves, and has been in existence since the eleventh century, and is thus a working village. Dr David Livingstone visited this village on more than one occasion, sitting under a giant mango tree in the middle of the square, to meet with the chief of the day. As the Chief viewed David Livingstone as an unbeliever, he was not allowed into the chief's compound. It was also two men from this village, long time retainers of David Livingstone, who carried his body all the way to the coast after he died near Lake Bangweulu. The descendants of these men still live in the village. The population numbers approximately 7000 and one is invited as a guest to view how the local people live, work, build and decorate their huts. All tours are conducted by a guide who lives in the village.

When Dr David Livingstone or Munali as he was known to Africans, met with Munokalya Mukuni (Royal of Royals), neither of them realised they shared one thing in common – the name "Livingstone". One of the rituals during coronation transforms the Mukuni title holder into the "Living Stone". And when he dies his death is officially announced as the "Living Stone is Shattered".

Chief Mukuni jointly rules the Victoria Falls region with a queen known as Be Dyango. Thus the Mukuni monarch practices a dual kinship system between male and female lineages. Because of this dual rule arrangement which is present even at village level, gender imbalance is on a comparatively small scale in this culture. It is found in family management level but is well balanced in rural power sharing. In this culture, it is the women who decide and manage the cultural issues including land allocation whereas men carry management of the day to day running of the village.

The current Chief Mukuni is a modern and enterprising man who is promoting tourism in his area while trying to minimise the adverse impact it might have on his people's way of life. Remember to respect local customs and for further guidance on social conventions ask your guide.

There is also a curio market in the village where clients are able to buy curios made by the villagers at reasonable prices.

The tour is approximately 2 hours long including transfers to the village. Transfers to and from the village are included in the price. Soft drinks and water are included in the tour.