



SOHO

SAVING ORPHANS
THROUGH HEALTHCARE
AND OUTREACH

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

COME WITH ME!

Covid 19 crippled the travel industry shortly after acquisition of INTSABA mountain farm just over two years ago. My visit at the end of March was my first since then. It was so impacting that I am inviting you to come along with me. Let me take you there!



March 20th. First week.

I arrived in Johannesburg from Atlanta on a Monday afternoon, impressed by the attention to Covid precautions and the bustle of back-to-normal business activity. I had an extra Covid test so I could spend an extra day to see one of SOHO's girls who had matured from childhood to adult with financial assistance, emotional support and a loving network of caring people to call 'family'.

She now worked in Pretoria an hour or so from Johannesburg as part of the Administrative staff of a law firm. I had to see her, having learned shortly before my trip that she had been gang raped and had spent three months in the hospital. This would be the second incident of its kind as she had been attacked as a school girl

walking through the sugarcane fields on her way from school.

I looked at her, no more than 120 pounds or so, and marveled at the steely strength and determination in her eyes. It was so hard listening to the



Survivor

atrocities that had been perpetrated on her. "I am, holding on to Job, Mom" she said, clutching the New King James Bible I had brought her.

I counseled, prayed, and encouraged. She was now determined to go to college for four years to become a Legal Advocate. "Because girls and women like me have no one to be a voice for them." I thank God for the willing hearts that have come together to help her begin a new life.

In this regard, her horrific story has a hopeful ending. In Eswatini, her home country, one in three girls is sexually abused. They are mainly poor and from rural communities. They give sex for food, shelter, cell phones, school fees and more because they lack education, opportunity and the means to stay alive.

Cover story cont.

SOHO is partnering with Andrews University School of Business in Michigan to provide livelihood skills, and with Oakwood University in Alabama to assist with social services, health and wellbeing. We've already started with our programs at Nhlambeni giving a chance for learning to the most neglected population. And we look forward to building a whole new world of opportunity at INTSABA Children's Village.

At the end of a first week of meetings with new Board members, staff and some of our children, it was

encouraging to see their commitment to the struggle to rise above their circumstances. Fortunate, a SOHO Ambassador who had two children, the first from forced sex, the second through her own vulnerability, proudly displayed her skills in hair braiding and cake making. She is determined to become a pastry chef or baker. And she wants to own her business. She also has to support the new born baby of her sister who died during childbirth. She came to visit me worn down and left with a smile of hope on her face. I was so grateful.



Staff members at convocation



Guests listen to the story of Nomathemba, a SOHO sponsored orphan who is now a teacher



Hair braiding to earn extra money



Fortunate's self taught cake making

Let us step into the shoes of one child as her story multiplied many times over, paints a picture of the lives and needs of many orphans and vulnerable children we want to serve. Her story and that of children like her, is why INTSABA Farm exists and why homes for these children are necessary.

Mbali is a 7 year old child who is a child living with Sindi Ngcamphala, who also is the mother of two boys. Sindi lives in a shaky stick and mud structure together with her husband and her children. The couple took turns to sell peanuts by the roadside as their source of income.

Mbali had lost her grandmother who cared for her and stayed with her father in the same house with her abusive step mother. Mbali`s father was sentenced to 3 years in prison because of a violent altercation with his sister. The stepmother`s abuse grew worse and neglect of the child deepened. Mbali began to run away from home and hide in the bushes because of fear of abuse.

That is where Sindi Ngcamphalala found her on the way to selling her peanuts. As destitute as she was, she offered Mbali a place to stay. When the case was brought to the attention of the Outreach Coordinator, steps were taken to sponsor the two boys so they had school uniforms and could attend school. Some repairs were done to the house so that it did not allow the family to be rain soaked when the weather was inclement and food parcels were provided monthly.

Life seemed to improve for Mbali and her new family. Then Sindi`s husband died suddenly. The rains came during the rainy season and the foundations of the hut began melting away. This is where Mbali stays now. Even while sponsorship funds provide food, Sindi is not able to make ends meet selling a few bags of peanuts daily but she tries though she is not in good health.

On the beautiful mountain farm, SOHO seeks to build the first two pods, each with three houses to accommodate six to eight children per home, plus a Caregiver. Mbali is at the top of the waiting list. Unless she gets a loving, permanent home, her future prospects are grim. She has no birth certificate and so has not been admitted to school. At seven-ish she needs to get a start on her education. The future for her would be a life of exploitation and abuse until she becomes yet another statistic.

SOHO seeks partners: schools, churches, organizations, individuals willing to help build the two pods of a total of six homes as well as a kitchen and multi-purpose space so that a new life can begin for Mbali and children like her. Would you partner with us to change the future for this child and her peers?



Where Mbali lives



Planned "pod" housing for children

I had the pleasure of going to INTSABA for the first time in two years! Flowers were in bloom and the beauty of the place was breathtaking. The days were packed. I wanted to visit the orphans in the nearby community. Our team was told to expect 80 orphans at the first stop, 45 at the second and 25 to thirty at the last stop. We loaded up the trailer with boxes of apples and pears and snacks as well as bags of produce from the garden. The numbers were underestimated as a total of 204 children were there to be served. That meant quick trips to the shops to replenish as the children were all hungry.

The children waited patiently, forming long lines with caregivers monitoring to ensure that each child was served. One group met on a hillside because the road to their community was not safe enough for the vehicle and trailer to enter. The last group waited under a tree. Many care points have no roof. Children come to receive a meal and they are content to sit on the ground to eat it.

I was eager to meet the Chief from the nearby community. I was introduced to him at first, near his orphan Care Point, then later entertained him and some members of his inner circle for lunch. These relationships are critical because the Chief ensures that the work done at the farm is respected by the entire community. He pointed out that he was grateful for the vision of a children's village at INTSABA. "There are few schools and the little children walk many miles," he explained. Shiselweni has the highest percentage of child-headed households in Eswatini. A place with safe housing, education, healthcare and the necessities to live a wholesome life will be a dream come true to these children.



First food distribution stop to 204 children



Kids in food line

The staff is hard working, walking miles over the mountain to get to work daily. We discussed repurposing one of the large out buildings to make a hostel where they could remain at the farm during the week and return home on weekends. I provided them with gifts of tee shirts and expressed appreciation for their excellent work. The grounds were properly maintained, the vegetable garden was growing well and flowers were blooming.

After stops and starts due to Covid or inclement weather or equipment

malfunction, we are close to the end of the new road that had been commissioned two years earlier. I had to hop onto the John Deere tractor to ride to the location where the old road meets the new two lane road we have all been waiting for. What a difference it will make in terms of safety as well as work productivity. With plans in place to begin work in earnest at INTSABA, this safe new road is an answer to prayer.



Patiently waiting!



Greeting the chief and his assistants



Presentation of t-shirts to the chief and guests



Staff at Intsaba receive tee shirts



Sean Hayter shares the benefits of the new, wider road.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

One of the things I wanted to do was to walk on the land that waits for children's homes to be built. I looked at the inspiring landscape and thought of the hundreds of lives that could be saved and changed here. Children like Mbali could grow up to be educated, productive members of the community, prepared to make a difference in the lives of others. The land is ready. All that's needed are partners to join us in building this village, one cluster of homes at a time.



The view from the porch

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM UPDATE

Over the past two years, Tom Chittick, retired Dean of Agriculture, Andrews University, has been busy. From his home in Benton Harbor, he has been providing resources and direction to get the farm up and running. Much attention has been given to the macadamia nut orchard.

At the time of the property acquisition, several hundred macadamia nut trees had been damaged or destroyed by fire that may have been set by poachers seeking to harvest honey.

The orchard was weeded, the trees examined and those that could no

longer grow healthy, were removed. During my visit, 500 trees then an added 180 trees were planted bringing the total number of trees to 1200. These were all contributions from Tom Chittick.

With a vision for sustainability of the farm, former board member, Kurt McKinley connected Cynthia Prime to Dr. Lawrence Schalk, retired CFO of Andrews University. He has been working with Tom and others to develop a Business Plan that would show how the Agriculture Program could contribute, not only to skills training and food, but to the financial sustainability of the village. A team of business, architecture, agriculture and education leaders from Andrews as well as influential alumni is expected to visit Eswatini this summer.



New Macadamia trees

H O P E

"The world is tired of pain. They don't want to see just the pain around us. They need to see HOPE!" This was the message of author, producer and chaplain, Gail Masondo, the South African Advisor to Saving Orphans through Healthcare and Outreach (SOHO), as the 15th Anniversary celebration of the organization's founding was contemplated. With producer/singer Sonya Sampson from LA and her husband, producer/bassist, Sibusiso Victor Masondo, Johannesburg, South Africa, a small team began developing an event that was aired at Oakwood University's Media Center on March 17th, 7pm CST.

Guest Host for the Event was Writer/Singer, Alvin Chea of 8-time Grammy award winning Acapella Jazz and Gospel Group, Take 6. The Evening of HOPE featured musical artists from the UK, USA and South Africa in a virtual Event that showcased the talents of Grammy and Dove Award winners as well as promising new talent. The diverse collection of Artists included prolific Nashville singer/songwriter Beth Neilsen Chapman, 2-time Dove Award Winner Babbie Mason; World Champion Games, 2-time Gold Medalists, Oakwood University Aeolians directed by

Jason Max Ferdinand; Committed, acapella male sextet with their recognized flawless harmonies; and Roxanne Pavel, Romanian Violinist. Also featured were: AMARII, Anika Anderson, BLACK VOICES, Brenden and Mpoomy, Gcina Nhlapho, Naledi Masilo, Noelle Parrino, SOUL THIRST, The Chitans, and Verona Pillay.

Along with music, former board members and civic leaders shared words of encouragement and affirmation. "Fifteen years is a good beginning but the need is greater than ever before," said SOHO Co-Founder and CEO, Cynthia Prime. "With God's help, we will rise to the occasion so that many more orphans and vulnerable children will be served and their lives transformed as we head towards a second decade".

Certificates of appreciation with a letter of thanks from the chairman of the board and the CEO were sent to all participants. SOHO thanks the local technical team headed by Craig Martindale, with Susanne Asato and Kris Fosnot, as well as Angela Khan and Heloise Alexander who assisted with Marketing support.

THANK YOU!

The SOHO Board thanks those who have contributed to the Matching Fund shared in a recent 3ABN interview. Thus far, we have raised \$40,000 of the \$100,000 matching donations. These funds will enable us to jump start the Children's Village. Together, we can change the future for the children.



Alvin Chea
Event Host
Guest Artist



Sonya Sampson
Producer
Guest Artist



Gail Masondo
Co-Producer
Musical Director



Sibusiso Victor Masondo
Co-Producer
Musical Director

COME JOIN US! There Are Many Ways You Can Help

Matching Fund

We have raised \$40,000 so far!

Help us reach our \$100K goal and double the impact of your gift!

Food Fund

\$30 per month - food parcels for homes with vulnerable children

Child Sponsorship

\$38 per month - school fees, meals, and transportation to and from school

Emergency Fund

SOHO serves orphaned and vulnerable children who are often in crisis due to abuse, injury, lack of food or other resources. Our Emergency Fund enables us to meet urgent needs that arise.

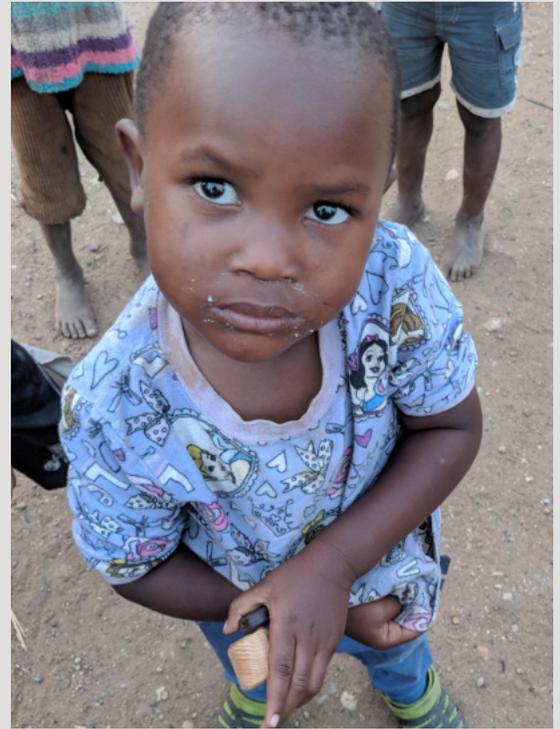
\$50 \$100 \$150 \$300 \$500

Monthly contribution One time contribution

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SOHO

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Growing Hope • Changing the Future

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