



# SOHO

SAVING ORPHANS  
THROUGH HEALTHCARE  
AND OUTREACH

— UPDATES FROM CYNTHIA PRIME, CEO —

## BEATING THE ODDS

In the Kingdom of Eswatini, one out of every five children does not complete high school. Challenges begin at the primary school level even though education at this level is free except for 'top up' fees, school uniforms and bus fare for many to attend school. For orphans and vulnerable children for whom a daily meal is a struggle, these minor expenses pose a major barrier to education.



*Ayanda, top of her class*



*Siyabonga Dlamini is now doing well in high school*

Students who complete primary school have a high rate of class work repetition (16.6%) so that it is not unusual to find children well into their mid-teens still struggling to complete the necessary requirements to get into high school. The dropout rate increases dramatically in secondary (high) school with 41% of dropouts in lower secondary and 52% in senior secondary due to pregnancy.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Ayanda Bembe and her brother Siyabonga Dlamini along with their older sister, Nontsidelelo Mazibuku were brought to SOHO's attention by Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) after an attempted rape of the oldest girl. At eight years of age, Nontsidelelo kept the household without consistent adult presence.



*Ayanda and Siyabonga before SOHO*

SOHO is grateful to sponsors such as Margaret who supported all three children from early childhood through the years of their development.

What a difference a caring heart makes! Today, Ayanda is performing well at school by coming in second in the past school year's exams. Siyabonga is working toward a high school diploma at Ekukhanyeni High School where he is in Form One. Their older sister struggled with academic life and is now a young mother of a newborn and a toddler. Nontsidelelo is trying her hand at crafts and is also considering baking and selling cakes as a livelihood. The children live with Gogo Khumalo in the Piggs Peak area.

## SALVAGING LIVES AT MAREKAMP

At Marekamp, slums located within ten minutes of Hope Discovery Learning Center (HDLC) at Nhlambeni, prospects for any kind of education for girls is dim and pregnancies due to human trafficking begin for some with the first menstrual cycle. Children who do not possess a birth certificate are not admitted into school and lack of proper ID is not unusual.

This year, SOHO is doubling the attendance at the pre-school with most of the new attendees coming from Marekamp. Their cost of schooling will need to be covered by a \$38 sponsorship cost per month, per child which includes meals at school and transportation to and from school. Can you help?



*Marekamp child*

*SOHO works to transform the lives of children of Child-headed households and those at risk of abuse and exploitation through a holistic, Christ-centered program to heal, educate, nurture and empower them to be self-sustaining.*

## ONE FAMILY'S STRUGGLE

Neliswa and Tenele were two sisters who were brought to SOHO's attention by Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) at ages 7 and 12. In the dark room where they lived alone at Marekamp, men would attempt to break down the door at night. SOHO built a secure door and provided keys to the children, but it was later discovered that they were tossed out of the room and placed at an even less secure location after SOHO visitors departed.



Lives for the two girls who were joined by their brother, Machawe, was unsettling. They were fostered in two separate homes and at one time registered at a private primary school. But life remained unstable, as one Gogo could not tolerate Tenele because she tossed objects when she was upset, and her brother's bed wetting made him a 'bad' child. Traffickers lured the older sister, as they did so many of the girls, because transactional sex purchased things needed or wanted. Life lacked purpose, so the daily focus was on survival.



The story of their journey is typical of many of their peers: intelligent youth, frustrated by limited opportunity and lacking the tools to compete in the marketplace even for lower-level jobs. Life has stabilized somewhat as they

live in a small house walking distance from HDLC. Machawe would love to learn computer technology or construction. He works as a security guard and struggles with finding his purpose in life.

Tenele who is fifteen, became pregnant immediately after her first cycle; the suspicion being that she also had been a trafficking victim from early childhood. She dreams of completing primary school and does not know what she wants except she desires for a better life. Her mother who is an addict and sex worker does not seek a relationship but would rather take away what little the children have. An altercation with her over the Christmas holidays resulted in

a cracked skull for Tenele. She is trying to understand how to mother a child when she herself still seeks parenting. Neliswa is now in her early twenties. She assists her younger sister with her baby, and is a part time helper at HDLC. She receives assistance in caregiving for her own two small children and struggles with the effects of malnutrition. She has a hunger for education, so that her life would not be hopeless. She looks forward along with her sister and brother to being recipients of the educational opportunities HDLC will be offering in the near future.

## FEEDING PROGRAM FOR OVER A HUNDRED



Most of the children at what is known as the Squatter's Camp, go to bed with empty stomachs. A SOHO feeding program will soon begin feeding over 100 children a hot meal daily just after their dismissal from school. Since the majority go to school hungry, the modest meal the school provides for lunch is all they receive. Those who are not fortunate to be served that meal at school often go without proper nutrition. The number of children may range up to 200 to be served. Along with the daily meal and words of encouragement, Saturday will feature a Sabbath program of nurture and faith for the children as well as their meal.

SOHO thanks the generous sponsors who have raised funds for food, contributed to the shelter that will house the activities as well as portable toilets and clean water.

*Share this newsletter with your friends and family*

## HOPE FROM A DISTANCE

When Dr. Alayne Thorpe (far right in the picture), former President of Griggs University and Dean, College of Education and International Services at Andrews University, visited HDLC campus with a leadership team, she saw the desperate need and extraordinary opportunity. After meetings with Principal Sherwin Abrahams and staff of the school, she saw an opportunity for Distance Learning to make a difference.



“If you can equip the HDLC campus with the technology to facilitate learning virtually, Andrews University School of Education will assist you with a program that can change the future for these children and youth.”

This was the essence of the conversation. Sponsors have provided the set-up funds and recruitment for the program has begun. Courses will include skill building certificate programs, English as a second Language (ESL), and remedial courses that would help with job readiness. The school has been overwhelmed with requests from even older adults wanting help with basic literacy. HDLC will offer the new program in a limited number of classrooms during the first half of the day and at full capacity after dismissal of the pre-school students. “This gives me so much hope,” said Neliswa, one of the perspective students. “I can’t wait to get started!”

Sherwin Abrahams, Principal, indicated that funds have been provided to install a monitor, webcam, security system and electrical fixtures and a donor has committed to provide computers for a computer lab. Neighborhood youth are looking forward to embracing this opportunity to learn. Hope is rising for many of them.



## INTSABA UPDATE

There is an atmosphere of excitement as infrastructure for the INTSABA Children’s Village begins to fall into place. Among the greatest needs was that of adequate water supply as well as increased energy resource. We are thankful that students and staff from Walla Walla School of Engineering raised in excess of \$10,000 toward a new well to be dug as soon as the rainy season comes to an end. Thanks also to friends of Walla Walla University who contributed to solar panels and batteries for the farm.

## BIG DAY AT HDLC PRESCHOOL

Graduation at HDLC is a big community event. Caregivers, community members and family come together to see the children perform, demonstrate some of what they have learned and receive their diplomas. The event emphasizes the importance of schooling in communities where children rarely get an opportunity to complete primary level schooling.



Board representatives, community leaders and well wishers were there to cheer the children on as they presented a special program for the event. Attendance at the pre-school is projected to double this school year.

*We work together to mend brokenness, open closed doors of opportunity, inspire future vision and build inner strength with the capacity to succeed.*

Contact us at: 317-779-0001 or [info@savingorphans.com](mailto:info@savingorphans.com)

## CARSCALLEN TO SERVE AS COO



Dr. Carey Carscallen doing research at INTSABA

Dr. Carey Carscallen, newly retired Dean, School of Architecture and Interior Design, has been appointed as Chief Operating Officer of Hope Seekers Alliance, the SOHO US Subsidiary through which INTSABA Farm was acquired. Carey and his wife Dorothy are veterans of the mission field, as they spent ten years in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, where Carey's role included teaching, school

administration and facilities construction. Carey served as Dean of the School of Architecture for over twenty years.

Carey was one of a team of leaders from Andrews University who visited the farm and SOHO projects in Eswatini in July 2022. Most recently, Carey and his wife Dorothy spent five weeks in Eswatini at INTSABA Farm where he became acquainted with SOHO the program and workers there as well as with projects at Nhlambeni.



While there, he facilitated installment of solar panels and arranged for improvements in the system to allow for the expected population growth when children begin to live there.



He also relocated the Dwell Earth Block Making Machine to the farm where he began research making blocks, to ensure their composition, strength and longevity.

Dorothy shared her culinary expertise with the local cook, as a health food advocate focused on natural products and ingredients.

Already his influence is being felt as he has assisted HDLC with plans for development of a skills training program next door to the existing school and will help to install a re-purposed 20 ft. container which his college students converted into a clinic, when it arrives. SOHO expresses deep appreciation for the Carscallens and cover them with our prayers as they help to make the dream of a Children's Village a reality.

Mail Donations to:

**THANK YOU!**



P.O. Box 78156  
Indianapolis, IN 46278

SOHO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered in the states of Indiana & Washington

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Over the years, SOHO has seen wonderful, heartwarming examples of humanitarian generosity. There is a woman in California who singlehandedly is keeping two girls alive. She paid for the medical costs for a gang rape victim who was in ICU. That girl is on the mend today, wanting to give her life in service to help other victims like her.

There is a woman in Naples, Florida who gives a portion of her income and writes letters to her friends to raise money for the feeding program at the Marekamp slums.

Another donor contributed to provide a simple structure to shelter children when they come to be fed.

The stories are many. There would be no ability to build homes, or feed, or educate children without the support of people like you. Here are some of our current needs:

### DISTANCE LEARNING

Help us get the classrooms Internet ready. We also need a large screen television monitor and desk top computers.

### SKILLS PROGRAM

We need \$380 per month to support the sewing and handcrafts project. We have just added 13 new participants to the program.

### SHIPPING OF THE CLINIC

The cost of shipping the clinic container from Michigan to Chicago is \$5,000. The paperwork is done, and the clinic can then be transported from Chicago to Eswatini. Help is needed to cover the cost of shipping.

### FOOD BUDGET

We are about to begin the feeding program which must continue once it has started. We have two months funding for food. Help us to fund at least a six-month supply.

### OPERATIONAL COSTS

Operational costs continue to grow as services expand. Contributions to this and the Emergency fund are appreciated.

## MISSION TRIPS

Volunteer on a mission trip to Eswatini this year!

We have several trips planned.

**May 14 - 25 (Only five places left)**

**July 16 - 30**

**July 31 - August 13**

Teachers, Gardeners, Builders, Medical ...

Whatever your skills are, you can serve!

You will forever be changed and change the lives of others!

Visit [Saving-Orphans.org](http://Saving-Orphans.org) for more information!