



SOHO

SAVING ORPHANS THROUGH HEALTHCARE AND OUTREACH

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

A DREAM UNFOLDS

Sometimes it takes a while for God to answer prayers but at SOHO we have learnt that He is never late. For almost a decade we prayed for land with Title /Deed that SOHO could purchase on which to build safe homes. Just before the COVID outbreak, that land, now Lentsaba Farm, was purchased.

The walls of the first safe homes are going up. Our dream is to establish a place of new beginnings for children who are the future of Eswatini.

A PLACE TO CALL THEIR OWN

Lentsaba Farm is a pristine, beautiful environment where nature is at its best. The homes in the Children's Village are designed in accordance with the Master Plan developed by Andrews University's School of Architecture under the leadership of Dr Carey Carscadden who now serves as COO of the entire development.

Each home has two spacious bedrooms to accommodate eight children on double decker beds, a care giver's room, a common area and kitchenette. A porch provides an inviting view of the surrounding scenic hills which seem to hug the skies on the horizon. Everywhere the views speak volumes of the awesome creativity of the God of nature.

This is a healing environment where broken lives could be mended. A quality education will give children an equal opportunity to succeed, while physical, emotional and spiritual health will be addressed in a holistic program aimed at mending the whole person.



Safe Homes are being built



Children, the hope of Eswatini's future



Homesites: A beehive of activity!

As we prepare to house children, we are aware that they will have to be fed, clothed, educated, parented. We need to hire care givers, a nurse, maintenance workers security and more.

We have made the first big step and our prayer is to raise \$200,000 to provide infrastructure for the new homes and to continue the building process while equipment is on the land. Keep SOHO in your plans and prayers as development of Lentsaba miracle Farm with its wonderful Children's Village, continues.

ONE CHILD'S JOURNEY

Mbali Matsabela came to SOHO's attention when our Outreach Coordinator informed us of a girl child found in the bushes. It was difficult to tell how long this 11-year-old had been on the run from abuse. We discovered that her father was in prison, she had no mother, and the woman at the place where she stayed was abusive.

SOHO had no authority to find a foster home and no home of our own to house her. A Gogo (Granny) from the Marekamp community had taken her in. We began supporting her there, enrolling her at Hope Discovery Learning Center and providing food parcels and emotional support.

Shortly afterward, the granny lost her husband with whom she sold peanuts by the roadside to survive. There was a suspicion that she might be drinking and that the home environment might not be stable.

Homes for Children



A Place for Holistic Living

The residential family units have been designed to be the building blocks for a nurturing and self-sustaining community. Each individual house hold will be the home for a group of 4-6 children, cared for by a trained Auntie or Carer. The spaces within the residential compound have been designed with the purpose to provide the children with an adequate shelter to grow, learn and communicate. The design also ensures that each child has privacy as well as the opportunity to build their set of skills in their shared community spaces. While each individual house has a kitchenette, there will be a shared community kitchen designed with a thatched roof where family units will also likely spend evenings, learning valuable homemaking skills like cooking and cleaning. As the children grow older they will have the opportunity to learn traditional crafts, like beading.

Three houses form a pod



Exterior rendering of a children's home



SOHO and SWAGAA staff visiting Mbali with her new family



Mbali saying goodbye to Marekamp Gogo

SOHO found a loving home with an older couple without children and began working with Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) to get her transferred to that home. The father, who had been released from prison refused permission although he had shown no interest in her life.

A search had been ongoing to find any relatives who might know and want the child. Months later, SWAGAA was able to track down a relative who had lost sight of the child and had been searching for her.

The reunion was bitter sweet. Mbali had come to love the old couple in the slums who had taken her in, and there were tears in her eyes as she left with her little

knapsack in company with the SOHO staffer and a SWAGAA representative.

Her new home was confirmed to be clean and livable and the gogo who knew and loved her was waiting with open arms for her. As a relative, she had the right to look after Mbali. SOHO will continue to support with food parcels and plans are to bring her to the feeding center at Marekamp occasionally to reconnect with friends.

The plight of children at risk is not easily addressed. Even in cases where children are abused, intervention can be challenging. Having stable, loving homes approved by Government agencies for children, enables them to heal as they grow, be supported as they mature and

empowered to become agents of positive change in their country. SOHO seeks to answer this call.

SEVENTEEN PSYCHOLOGISTS VISIT SOHO

This summer, SOHO was blessed by the visit of seventeen psychologists from Nova Southeastern University. With the critical need for mental health services evidenced by the high juvenile suicide and substance abuse rates, SOHO has benefitted from an annual visit over the past eight years. COVID had temporarily brought a halt to that program.

The team visited Hope Discovery Learning Center where they conducted assessments and distributed backpacks with supplies to all of the children.

At Marekamp slums, they helped feed the 200 children served by SOHO, also going to the market and purchasing a month's welcomed supply of fresh foods and groceries. Much needed clothing was distributed there as well. And the community was engaged in helpful discussions on substance abuse, stress and depression.

They conducted stress/burnout sessions with teachers at Railway Primary School where classes are sometimes over 50 children with a single teacher in a classroom. Children from Marekamp who have IDs attend this school.



Distributing backpacks at Hope Discovery Learning Center



The team of psychologists from NSU



A visit with the chief of Lentsaba Farm community

At Lentsaba Farm, the team visited a Chief with his entourage from the area, where they listened to concerns from the community. Clothing was provided for orphans in the community and vegetables were donated.

SOHO extends thanks to Dr Stephen Campbell, who has coordinated the program during past years, and to Dr. Oraib Toukhly who will be leading out after his retirement.

A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

With access to health care limited for orphans and vulnerable children, accidents and injuries that are not life threatening, can often become so.

Banele Motsa is a Marekamp resident who came to the SOHO feeding center with eyes glazed with pain, but he was also hungry. As he took his place in the line, Christopher Thompson, one of the visiting psychologists noticed that he had an oozing wound on his leg. The injury was plastered over with a white, paint like substance, and the skin was taking on a green cast.

"There is a child's leg is moving toward sepsis," he said anxiously. The child was

brought to the attention of the SOHO coordinator who immediately began a search for a relative.

Soon a fifteen year old arrived but he could not take the child anywhere to be served because he was looking after a three year old while his mother worked.

Christopher provided car fare and funds for the cost of medical care. Late in the evening, the SOHO staff member went with the child's brother to a clinic some distance away where treatment for both legs was provided. The child had burned both legs with boiling water while trying to cook.

Thankfully, the wound healed after a series of daily clinic visits, thanks to one random act of kindness. All were aware that the child could have lost his leg or even his life, had not there been intervention. SOHO is grateful for the professional volunteers who come to provide needed services for the population we serve.

NEWS FROM THE FARM

By Carey Carscallen

There has been a lot of activity on the farm over the past few months. There is a

lot to be thankful for. God has been leading and providing through the generosity of many new and faithful supporters.

The macadamia orchard has been expanded by clearing brush from about eight hectares (Approx. 20 acres) and planted 1,000 macadamia trees, bringing the total to 2,000 trees.

The workers are busy installing the pipes for the irrigation system for the new trees so they won't have to water them by hand. Imagine pulling hoses and watering 1,000 trees! They have been successful, and the trees are looking very healthy.

The apiary is slowly growing, and as the weather warms and the flowers blossom production should pick up. Traps are set in trees around the farm to attract bees to put in the empty hives that are in the apiary, and more hives are being prepared.

The farm and its agricultural operation is important for the sustainability of the Children's Village



Boy with bandaged legs from burn



Dr. Stephen Campbell (left) with Christopher Thompson



Carey Carscallen



View of the orchard with over 2000 trees



Irrigation system to water the Macadamia trees



The growing apiary

FROM VULNERABILITY TO EMPOWERMENT

'In a world where the term 'entrepreneurship' often conjures images of Silicon Valley and swanky startups, there is a narrative that speaks of an entrepreneurship rooted in human stories, skills, and struggles. SOHO's initiative, Intsabavillage.org, isn't just an online marketplace. It's an ecosystem of hope where orphans and the vulnerable transform into artisans, and then into self-sustaining individuals. This platform gives them a unique voice and an avenue for their talents, ensuring that their crafts don't just become commodities but symbols of resilience and hope.'



Enterprise crafts at Andrews University SBA store.

These sentiments voiced by Professor Armand Poblete, express the vision behind the innovative Artisan Market place that Andrews University's School of Business is developing. The marketplace features SOHO products created by young women at risk of human trafficking and otherwise marginalized and poor. Products are also sourced in Burkina Faso and other parts of the world, each with a compelling story.

Mphumilelo Similane, the project leader for SOHO is working with her team to create home décor and accessories that are being well received

"The journey ahead is undoubtedly challenging, Poblete states. "The realm of handcrafted goods is both rewarding and ruthlessly competitive. But beneath the metrics, numbers, and strategies lies the heart of this mission - the artisans. Their stories, dreams, and aspirations are the driving force. And with every purchase, every click, and every share, we aren't just appreciating art; we're changing lives."



Mphumilelo Similane displaying the women's crafts

HELP WANTED

FARM MANAGER

Farm manager needed at Lentsaba Farm.

Farm description - 1083 acres of mountainous terrain in the southwest corner of ESwatini. Approximately 250 acres of arable land that has spring fed water sources.

Crops - 2400 macadamia trees varying from 2 to 7 years old under irrigation.

Future crop development would include expansion of the macadamia orchard, establishing fruit trees (bananas, mangoes, avocados etc.), establishing vegetable crops (cabbage, garlic, tomatoes etc.). Winter production of

vegetables might justify greenhouse development in the future.

The farm serves a dual purpose (1) to provide food for the children (2) to provide a source of income for the Children's Village helping to make it self sustainable.

Manager's qualifications - Previous experience growing crops for sale. Knowledge of current cultivation practices.

GENERAL MANAGER

A resident General Manager is needed at Lentsaba Farm who will eventually take the reins from the current retiring GM.

The candidate will oversee daily operations, working with staff, HOSA COO, Farm Management, and eventually Children's Village teams to ensure a smooth successful operation.

Needed: Clear communication, strong interpersonal and organizational skills, budgeting and financial management ability. A highly motivated, resourceful problem solver who can create a Christ-centered work environment where employees and residents thrive.

CALL TO ACTION!

BECOME A PARTNER!

This has been a challenging year for SOHO. Growth requires more operational support, more infrastructure and more funds to address the growing needs of The Children's Village.

Ten years ago, we thought of building small cottages on the Swazi Nation land assigned to us just to begin to serve the children in greatest need. Instead, today, we are building sturdy homes on our miracle Lentsaba farm where numerous children will be taking up residence. This means funds are urgently needed for:

- Furnishing of the homes, kitchen, dining areas etc.
- Security personnel to remain on the property.
- Staffing to include care givers and management personnel.
- Worker's accommodation
- Operational funds

Partner with us with your prayers, your resources, your time and expertise. God has given us an opportunity to make a significant difference in this part of the world. Help us seize this Divine moment.

BECOME A SPONSOR!

We need sponsors for our growing population of children. Very soon, we will need to hire and train house parents and other support personal. Imagine running a household of twenty children. That is just the beginning for the Lentsaba Children's Village.

The Children's Village Fund will include cost of upkeep, staffing and overall support for the children.

YOU CAN HELP, JOIN US!

Children's Village Fund: Help us prepare for the children who will be living in the new homes. We need Security and other infrastructure, care givers and other staffing plus operational costs. Our Goal is \$200,000. We have raised \$50k. From our hearts, we thank you!

Current operating fund: \$20,000

This critical area has a shortfall. Assistance with operational costs is greatly appreciated.

Food fund: \$30 per month: *We now provide over 250 meals daily!*

Child Sponsorship: Unlike many programs, Lentsaba Children's Village is committed to taking care of the whole child and creating a loving family environment for the child.

Co-Sponsorship. \$38 covers Food, clothing and basic care

Full Sponsorship \$305 covers housing and all living expenses.

\$50 \$100 \$300 \$500 \$1,000

Monthly One time

Your contributions are tax deductible. For more information:
email: kris@savingorphans.com | phone: (317) 779-0001
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*Let's change the future
for children in need!*

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



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