



Newsletter

AN ORPHAN IS EVERYONE'S CHILD

EMELDA'S STORY

"Sweet 16 never kissed before", as the saying goes. 16 is a time when girls bloom; ugly ducklings become swans and life is truly at its best. The attention from boys, the teenage friendships, the carefree laughter is what you would expect in any normal teenage girl's life.



But not so for Emelda. We first met Emelda at our health club training workshop. She was so frail and gaunt, with sores on her lips. Her thin hair bore testimony to her HIV status. She was given a bed to sleep during training because walking to the training center a distance less than 1km had totally exhausted her. Health clubs train nutrition therapy in the hope of improving longevity

for those who are affected by the virus. Emelda had been registered into the program by her foster mom. Her CD4 count was ten. She looked like a nine year old.

Emelda's mother had passed away six years back. Her grandmother had taken her in. Nobody seemed to know for certain about her father. In August 2014 Emelda came to visit her brother in Chitungwiza and refused to go back to her rural home. Her brother is married and rents part of a house in Chitungwiza.

FICTITIOUS NAMES
USED TO PROTECT THE
FAMILIES

The plight of children in difficult circumstances does not only arise from HIV as a disease but its negative socio-economic impact as well. Whilst the average life span of a Zimbabwean is sitting at 37, a few have managed to reach 100. Gogo—is one such woman, At 102 years old she is not only unable to walk but laden with the burden of looking after 7 children aged 7,4,8, 9,10, 11, and one 17 year old girl, who is suffering from Chronic depression.

News about her plight reached us from one of our collaborating partners Leso and together we worked to find a solution for this desperate situation. Gogo's health is failing and understandably so. At one time, volunteers had to clean her up, daily as she was suffering from severe diarrhea and the little children could not do much to help. Human faeces were everywhere. Social Welfare were contacted and the children were taken into an orphanage in Shamva. This however was not possible for 10 year old, who has a different father to the other children. She was sent to a distant paternal relative. he is complaining that he has no capacity to look after her.

The parents to all these children are alive and working in South Africa. It is often difficult to fathom how a parent can make a decision to leave little ones with an aged guardian. Often desperate economic times birth desperate measures.

The SAODI Incomes & Livelihood team plans to go and check on the children and arrange a monthly reconnection day for the children who have been separated from their siblings.

Why not come along and help us celebrate reunions this summer holiday!

GLIMMER OF HOPE

The landlord's daughter, Nyasha, noticed that the young girl was not going to school and that her health was compromised. Nobody seemed really interested in talking care of the sickly child. She befriended the child, started feeding her and as life would have it, the child moved next door. This did not seem to bother Emelda's family. Though she was under very caring hands with Nyasha as her defector foster mom, Emelda's health continued to deteriorate. Nyasha sought for help with her husband's support, and she shouldered the responsibility to enrol onto our health club program to enable her to care for Emelda.

Emelda was started on our nutritional therapy



immediately. She was fed sweet potatoes, avocados, bananas, fruit juice, liver, spinach and madora. Barely two weeks later there was a gleam in her eyes and a smile threatened to break across her face. Emelda was coming back. She had put on at least one and a half kilograms and we were thrilled. We took our second baton of nutritious foods to her. Our counselors spent

time with her and discovered that she had stopped taking ARVs for the whole of April and May.

To her misfortune there was so much fighting within Emelda's family which resulted in her father coming to pick her up and going with her back to Mhondoro. Emelda's health deteriorated after she was taken and she later passed on at her rural home in Mhondoro.



After a week Nyasha contacted us with a shocking revelation. The assumption had been that Belinda was born HIV positive, but this was terribly wrong! The young girl had been raped by her mother's boyfriend when she was in grade 3 and that was the unfortunate occurrence by which she was infected with the virus. Her mother kept this a secret and also told the girl not to tell anyone until she died. Because of that this case was not reported to the police and the perpetrator got away scot free. The girl disclosed this to her father on the point of death, who later told the mourners publicly at the funeral.

Belinda's life was sadly cut short by negligence and above all a lack of earlier intervention that could have kept her alive. She may be late, but aren't there others suffering a similar fate? Are we just witnesses to such atrocities in our own communities? Are we holding back our help at the expense of those who need it most? What can we do to help, each of us in our own capacity? Considering that she probably was not the only one, it is clear how much help is really needed out there.

"AREN'T THERE OTHERS SUFFERING A SIMILAR FATE?"

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER CONTINUES THE GOOD WORK

Temberere and Chapeyama , are small villages in a very mountainous terrain, 15 kilometres from Zimunya township located 10 miles from Mutare City centre. Three young and enthusiastic volunteers at the forefront of the My Brother's Keeper program; Louisa Chindiyo , Brenda Chishakwe and Trymore Kwadzai, brave the rough

"THE THOUGHT THAT SOMEBODY CARES ENOUGH TOUCHES THEM BEYOND WHAT WE COULD COMPREHEND."

mountainous terrain to go and see the children they are helping to stay in school. Braving the chill of winter and the rugged terrain, the threesome travel on foot to gain a taste of what these little children have to go through just to be able to get an education.



The children have to walk that distance every day barefooted to go to school. In one household none of the children have shoes or jerseys. They sleep on a mat with an extremely thin blanket. One of the children has been coughing baldy because the winter has been most unkind.

In this rocky and densely vegetated area, the children have to wake as early as four in the morning and make their way down the mountain to make it to school on time. Typically, in this environment the security of the children is compromised and concentration on school work is difficult because the mud and pole huts in which they live are often too small to accommodate the large families. Some of the children's guardians are weathered, old and susceptible to sickness leaving the children no choice but to wake up early to do the chores before preparing themselves for school. As if that is not enough, water sources are far off and they do not have boreholes

but fetch water from wells and rivers. Seasonally these sources dry up. Field harvests this year were very poor so mealie meal is scarce to cater for the children's families.

Elliot Malanga is one such child who has had to deal with such pressure every morning. He was in dire need of attention as he was not feeling well and was physically deteriorating without enough blankets to accommodate him for winter. As a result at Elliot's home they often do not have relish which brings up the need for the kids to be provided with matemba or soya chunks to sustain them. Fortunately, the volunteers recently managed to buy 3 blankets from a Fundraising



Breakfast and the auction of a beautiful art work by Tendai Mafunda. The response was joyous! We have never seen such gratitude. The same breakfast held by Back in My Stiletto women, enabled us to clear arrears for 3 Grade seven children who were at the verge of failing to write exams. The breakfast was also helped us to pay something towards 20 of the 24 children under our care.

Sometimes children just need to escape into a new environment for them to open their minds to endless possibilities that await them. The trio held a fun day where they played games, ate maputi and drank fun fresh. It is simple moments like these that solidify the relationship amongst the volunteers and the children and their guardians.

The My Brother's Keeper team and SAODI at large is eternally grateful for the contributions that have come in to better the kids lives.

It is often an emotional experience because they get to

see firsthand the positive effects of what is received. The children are even more excited, no matter how small the gesture, because the thought that somebody cares enough touches them beyond what we could comprehend, giving them hope for their seemingly uncertain future.

We call upon you to help us make a difference and assist in raising their standard of living and building their dreams. This is only one community in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa, which SAODI aims to reach. It is only the beginning.

OUR NEEDS

Hot Priority List:

- *School fees
- *Socks
- *Jerseys
- *Tracksuits
- *Blankets



ZIVANAYI'S STORY

Zivanayi lives in a partly roofed house with no doors or windows. A structure that her family was allowed to use by a well wisher. A beautiful 12 year old, she lives with her two uncles, two niece's and her mother who are all mentally challenged. As a result, she is expected to take care of the family, doing most of the chores, though at times her mother helps her cook. She has no privacy or safety and is rarely at home. You will find her at the borehole with her friends, where she spends most of her time trying to escape the environment at home.



BACK IN MY STILETTOS FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST:

FOSTERING THE FUTURE GENERATION

On the cool morning of the 29th of May SAODI hosted a successful Fundraising Breakfast under its 'Back In My Stilettos' theme at the impeccable Giovanni's Restaurant at Arundel Shopping Center in Mnt. Pleasant Harare. Back In My Stilettos (BIMS) is a network of professional women who get together to use their influences and businesses to get the children stuck at home without money for tuition back into school. They also network to attain blankets, jerseys, shoes, and endless other essentials to secure a basic standard of living for these children. The core of the breakfast was to encourage local businesses and individuals to use their financial and networking influence to contribute to the wellbeing of the children in response to the whopping challenge of 1.6 million orphans in Zimbabwe. The turn-out was fair. ZOL is to be applauded for its support as not just the middle management where present, but the CEO as well.

The particular focus was on

SAODI's My Brother's Keeper and Sisindimayi programs. My Brother's Keeper is a program to mentor and mobilize resources to train young people on how to give back to society, under which 24 children are cared for. The program is in its third year and facing multiple challenges, especially in attending to the astronomical struggles of some of the children. Day to day visitation by the young volunteers to the kids has become a daunting battle in itself. In its complementary program Sisindimayi Zimbabwean women are inspired to foster children. The aim is to empty orphanages.

SAODI believes human beings are not meant to be raised in institutions but in loving homes. The desire to inspire families to take in the children has been a difficult one therefore "financial fostering..." "is the beginning of this process" says Linda Chaya-Dawanyi, Director of SAODI. If corporations were to give \$75 towards the care of at least one

child it would keep them alive, educated and living a quality lifestyle. Begging from door to door would be a thing of the past.

In an overwhelming and heart rending speech the director emphasized the need to avoid the habit of giving used and unwanted clothing. She emphasized that all our children, no matter our status, are potential orphans therefore "we must be prepared to do for the orphan child what we are prepared to do for our own". She encapsulated the psychological effect of giving poor quality on the children.

**"WE MUST BE PREPARED
TO DO FOR THE ORPHAN
CHILD WHAT WE ARE
PREPARED TO DO FOR
OUR OWN"**

“What we give is not shunned, but we must realize that the quality of items we give reflects the heart behind our giving; especially if we are capable of better. What is important is not just the gift, but how it affects their self worth. It is encouraged to give our best so that orphans do not feel second graded but are worth the real deal like other children.”

The charge in its entirety was stirring to say the least.



International artist Tendai Mafunda, who recently presented a portrait of Gracia Machel to the iconic lady herself in Harare, completed the event with her brilliant art piece of Mother and Child. She testified that she felt compelled to partner with organizations to auction some of her work during fundraisers to give back using her God given talent of painting. The piece spewed relevance as in her own words she explained that the painting was beyond a woman carrying her child, “The child is not necessarily her own... the woman is not necessarily a woman; the woman is all of us...” Ultimately it symbolized a child being cared for by their community, by us, which fed into the resounding theme of SAODI’s cause, ‘An orphan is everyone’s child’. Tendai is a prime example of doing what you can with what you are capable of doing, a prompt to all of us to do the same and an appeal for us to support the cause.

The stories that stand out like those of **Zivanayi** and **Emelda** stress the need for quick intervention and the responsibility we all have towards contributing to the livelihood of every orphan child no matter how little we can give. The overall call was on companies, who invest loads into their business marketing budgets to consider the children and take at least one under their financial wing. They could also use their network to tell other organizations that can join the movement to



change a life.

If we set our minds to it we could all do something, to solve the problem of our orphans as the words of Sydney Smith simply put, “It is the greatest of all mistakes to do nothing because you can only do little – do what you can.”

The main Back In My Stilettos (BIMS) event is scheduled for later this year.



SUPPORT US!

SOUTHERN AFRICA DIALOGUE (SAODI) APPRECIATES ANY AND ALL CONTRIBUTIONS : CASH OR KIND...

AUGUST 28TH

Hello Summer Fundraiser
Featuring Jazz Band: DZINZA



SAODI CHARITY STALLS

SOUTHERN AFRICA DIALOGUE is a faith-based not for profit organization founded in 1999. Registration number: MA836/2009. It seeks to meet the needs of orphans, children, and women in difficult circumstances.

Fundraising Objectives: to pay school fees, secure warm clothing and blankets for our 22 children under our two programs My Brother's Keeper and Sisindimayi. We are requesting warm blankets + navy blue and coffee brown jerseys, beanies, gloves and scarves.

On Sale

We have wonderful mom's beanies, chargeable car mugs, Eco cups, branded mugs and dog tags on sale. We need your support to help them have a better quality of life.



To order or donate
come to:

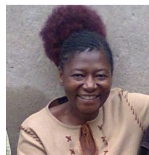
No. 17 Garlands Ride,
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OR

Avondale Flea Market

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