



SAODI

Newsletter May

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do." -Edward Everett Hale

ONE STEP IN A THOUSAND

In the humble township of Zimunya in Mutare thrives a youth led program that seeks to respond to the needs of children in difficult circumstances. The program called "My Brother's Keeper" is the offspring of faith based NGO - Southern African Dialogue (SAODI) headquartered in Harare. The program focuses on raising responsive young leaders, who are committed to contributing to practically solving problems of orphans and vulnerable children as well as the environment.

Louisa Chindiyo, an eighteen year old, took the initiative in 2012 to respond to the problems, and approached SAODI with her dream to change circumstances for her community. Louisa was partnered by the ex-head girl to Zimunya Secondary, Brenda Chishakwe, and the two soldiered on against disheartening conditions to make life better for children less advantaged than themselves.



Most of the children are being fostered in struggling homes where the environment in which they live and study is not conducive. The two girls took on the task of raising school fees, clothing, feeding and creating a safe space for play and study.

Several youths joined them but lost heart, as they realized that the program was not about creating employment for them but changing circumstances for others. Trymore Kwadzayi became a part of this initiative in 2014, and the threesome have shown unrivalled commitment in supporting the kids under their wings by volunteering their time and effort.



"Sometimes, we have nothing to give, and so we play with them. It means a lot to them and to us." - Louisa Chindiyo

The brave threesome have been able to raise resources for books and occasional clothing but not to the desired extent. They have secured play and study center, but the rentals have been a struggle to raise.

"It is so discouraging going from door to door, business to business hoping someone will take the matter to heart and help... hardly anyone does, but we keep going." - Brenda Chishakwe



A typical week in the life of the Zimunya dream team involves playing with the kids, giving guidance and council, helping them with school work and pleading with the schools not to send the kids home whilst the funds are being raised.

Community co-operation is fundamental to solving the problem of children in difficult circumstances. Whilst help from outside the country is helpful, it makes more sustainable sense for the members of the community to respond to the plight of the children. This is the greatest challenge, as the willingness to do so is at an all-time low. "If we cannot care for our own, we need to reflect on what it means about ourselves.", says Linda Chaya-Dawanyi, director of SAODI.

The current economic climate is extremely difficult for most people, and this makes this work much harder. My Brother's Keeper is eternally grateful for school heads, community members and local business owners who have lent a helping hand to the humble initiative.



The My Brother's Keeper team's dream is to provide a play and study center where the kids can escape from their tough environment and have a decent meal and place to study. The Pentecostal Church at Zimunya use their space to feed kids under the program, which afforded the trio space to be with the kids and grow. They offered one big room and grounds where the kids could exercise. \$75 a month is needed for the rentals. The church will also give bible study, guidance and counseling for the Kids. Paying rentals has been a challenge.

The team earnestly works to promote the initiative to cultivate and expand the dreams of the less fortunate children in Zimbabwe.



RAISING A NEW BREED OF YOUNG LEADERS

The central aim of My Brother's Keeper is to raise a generation of leaders who practically meet the needs of the less privileged by going into the trenches and giving back to the community to leave a footprint that builds people and their dreams. Africa is guilty of too many conferences, seminars and papers, but not enough lives changing. SAODI invests in grooming responsive leaders, in hope that the culture in which these kids are bred will permeate every facet of life these young people occupy.

The young people are taught selflessness, self-denial, commitment, consideration, empathy, financial integrity and problem solving. They are also taught professional skills in relation to their projects and personal dreams. At induction they are taught: You commit to the kids for life. This work is not a hobby, and if you cannot be in it for life, it is best you do not become a part of it at all.

My Brother's Keeper's mandate is to eliminate social differences within the community of Zimunya so as to create harmonious living, a unified environment, and a love that is shared even beyond its vicinity. Under the

simple but powerful motto "Big Dreams Our Concern", the young people focus on first identifying the needs and wants of children, thereby creating the basis by which to support and promote them to a higher standard of living.

"We strive to work with the community by breaking down communication barriers between the community and the less privileged to make these children visible so they are given the boost they need; molding their talents to make their plans and dreams a reality." - Trymore Kwadzayi

The majority of the children are affected by AIDS , and the trio works to ensure their health and well being





WALKING TOGETHER: MEET THE TEAM

1. Mrs. LINDA CHAYA-DAWANYI

Director of SAODI and lead trainer of the My Brother’s Keeper program, Linda is mentor and backbone of the program. Growing up in Zimunya where she attended grade 1, she has focused on her root home to ensure the well being and sustainability of its community. Linda dreams of a time when the program will cover Zimbabwe at large.

2. LOUISA CHINDIYO

Louisa, inspired by her drive to give back to society, volunteered to work with her community through My Brother’s Keeper to give back the love and teachings she was taught. Soft spoken and determined, she completed her O’ levels in Zimunya and is focused to see her community, of which she is so proud, make a difference in the nation.

3. BRENDA S. CHISHAKWE

A former Head Girl of Zimunya Secondary, Brenda is a one of a kind young woman who shares deep feelings for the dire situations the children are in, having been there before, and a fiery passion to leave her footprint through My Brothers Keeper. She echoes the sentiments of Anatole Franc: “To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe”.

4. TRYMORE KWADZAYI

Trymore, an intelligent and God fearing young man, is yet another member of My Brother’s Keeper in Zimunya. Born and raised there he found the urge to make a change in the area. This became his motivation to “...stop at nothing until love and unity become a daily food in Zimunya”.



Under the wings of the remarkable trio, who have volunteered their time and effort to changing their community, are 15 young Boys and Girls of the Zimunya area. Ranging between the ages of 8-16; they are the reason and the dream of the young initiative.



Can You Lend A Hand

Our Needs,
and why you
are one of them

The ultimate outcome and resolute aspiration of My Brother's Keeper is to improve the quality of life for these kids to an acceptable standard. Brenda Chishakwe is quoted saying, "There is nothing worse than attempting to define poverty in the life of a child with the best words." The harsh realities that confront these children are often hard to believe they are taking place in our own backyard.

My brother's keeper also has a chapter for mothers who foster kids called Sisi Ndimayi (literally to be a woman is to be a mother to everyone). Both programs are looking after 24 children in total. The financial reality is we are not coping, it is difficult to say no to the needs of children who are brought to your doorstep.

My brother's keeper has 2 chapters in Mutare and Sisindimayi in Chitungwiza and Hatcliffe.

Our needs for the hour are as follows:

- * drop in centre rentals 900
- * chairs 15
- * 5 tables 2 metres 90cm
- * 2 lockable steel cabinets (pantry)
- * second hand carpets dark colors 9x 12
- * foam rubber mats single 15
- * 30 thick blankets
- * 80 pairs of warm winter socks
- * 20 pairs of shoes sizes to be provided
- * 20 pairs of tackies
- * 20 sets uniforms (jerseys, tracksuit, shoes, socks, sport kit, uniform)
- * 20 pairs of closed front pushes
- * 40 jerseys
- * school fees arrears and current; 70 x8
- * 2x 500 . two children are better off

in boarding schools because of their home environment.

- * 10 doors
- * 5 windows
- * roofing timber
- * 20 sheets corrugated iron knowledge's house
- * 10 bags cement
- * bus fare 130 per month
- * contribution to child cares 250 x 12 =3000
- * medical aid 10 x 24= 240
- * exam fees; 1000
- * 4 desktop computers
- * 1 small printer

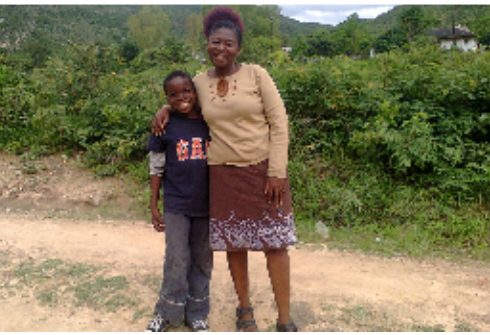
To donate please bring items to 17 garlands ride, Mt pleasant .

Cash donations can be deposited into Stanbic account:kindly keep proof of payment to enable us to issue a receipt .

Below are a few of the children, most of whom are the most serious cases within the program. These are just nine of the fifteen, so there are others just as neglected, sickly and in dispare. These are examples of the adversaries these children face that no child should live to bare.



THE CHILDREN



TANAKA MUKUHWA

Tanaka is an eleven year old boy who recently suffered from a stroke that has created complications with his right leg. His father is deceased so he lives with his Amaiguru (Older sister to his mother). Despite this, he is a lovely child with a big smile and a top student with very good grades at Zimunya Primary where he is in Grade 6. His favourite hobby is playing quizzes. He says that when he grows up he wants to be an actor. Tanaka has a very determined spirit. He wrote his exams whilst he was in hospital and came out tops in his class.



OWEN & EDMORE MANYUKA

Owen is a very bright student at Zimunya Primary, who with the right motivation and resources will have a bright future. He is now in Grade 7 preparing for Form 1 next year. Owen was supposed to be in form 3 but due to lack of funds he is still at primary level. He lives with his mother Prudence Katso, his brother Edmore and his sister. Edmore like his brother loves sport and. Their father died and his mother is struggling to make a living, and feels defeated in life. Owen and Edmore need blankets, shoes, food, clothes, stationary and personal care because they cannot even afford a toothbrush.



KNOWLEDGE MASHAYAMOMBE

Knowledge 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 her time trying to escape the environment at home.



SILAS MAZENGERO

Born in a family of five, 17 year old Silas lost both parents. He lives with his elder brother, who has a family. Tragedy struck again in 2012 when he lost his twin brother due to a lack of treatment. Silas wrote his O Levels last year but did not make it, He lacked time to study because he had to sell cool drinks before and after school in order to pay for his own education. Silas has the potential if he gets the time to study. If he can go to the boarding school, he will be able to concentrate on his work. He also complains of headaches regularly.



TINASHE GEBE

Tinashe is a mere Grade 2 who learns at Marudzikwa Primary School, and lives in a child headed home with his 17 year old sister and 12 year old brother. Their Father remained and only occasionally sends food. Their mother abandoned them. Tinashe is sick and at times does not take his medication because they cannot afford it!



SHARON SIBANDA & LISA MUNDIETA

Both are Zimunya High students. Sharon was the last born of a family of four. Her parents died and so her aunt 'Gogo Manyanya' (58) took her in. She was hospitalized in 2008 and was extremely ill. As a result she was not well enough to go to school for a while. She is under medication and has monthly reviews. She often needs psychological support and sometimes faces difficulties from peers.

Lisa has not been to school since January, and according to one of the teachers "It is a financial matter". She walks long distances to get to school which affects her attention span.

CONTACT US

saodialogue@gmail.com

+263.733.480.811

No. 71 Garlands Ride

Mount Pleasant, Harare

WRITTEN BY: BONGANI MHLANGA

RESEARCH: CYNTHIA CHIWANDIRE

SUPERVISING EDITOR: LINDA CHAYA-DAWANYI

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROBIN DAWANYI