

May 2020

Dear Hands at Work Family and Friends,

The story you are about to read reflects the care, activities, and access to services usually provided at Care Points across Africa. In the current season of the Coronavirus (COVID -19) pandemic, those services look different and are largely focused on daily access to food, and in ensuring safety for the most vulnerable children. Whilst adhering to government restrictions, our care for the most vulnerable will not stop. This is especially important in a season where our children face increased levels of vulnerability.

Within South Africa, Audrey and the Hazyview local office team are committed to continuing in their care of the most vulnerable children they serve. Following a strict nationwide lockdown since the end of March, Audrey and her team have connected with local governments and councilors to understand how Care Points can operate in this unique season, given that Hands at Work is an Essential Service Provider.

In Mafambisa and Sommerset communities, Care Points remain open with children accessing a daily, hot meal every day which they take home in containers. Even the brief contact children have with Care Workers, who arrive from 6am every morning, helps to identify and follow up specific needs amongst the children. Hygiene is emphasised and modelled at the Care Points, also.

In the communities of Mluti and Zwelisha, local councilors have not allowed food preparation to take place and Care Points have remained closed. However, Holy Home Visits are allowed to take place under strict social distancing guidelines from members of the local office team, and other African staff members. Food parcels are also being delivered directly to vulnerable families in these communities, every 2 weeks.

In the community of Pfunani, there is a certain fear that still exists of how the virus could be carried into their community, particularly surrounding International people. Audrey's team have continued to visit the community together with other African staff, to support Care Workers who come every day to cook hot food for children which is collected in takeaway containers. Hand washing is emphasised at the Care Points for all children who come every day.

Please stand with us in prayer for

Pray for Audrey, Gugu, Bethuel, Melody and Prudence to have strength and perseverance to keep 'running towards the problem'. Pray for patience, wisdom and courage as they continue to respond to government restrictions and changes, so that care to the most vulnerable does not stop.

Pray for our children who find the Care Point to be a place of safety. Pray that they will be kept safe within their homes and that Care Workers will continue to reach out in love and support at this time.

Pray for wisdom in how to prepare communities well, in the event that the virus spreads further.



Hands at Work
AFRICA



Report on

Mafambisa Community, South Africa

January to March 2020

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA (UK) *in partnership with*
St Andrew's Church

MAFAMBISA

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION

Children currently supported: **100**



Mandisa is slowly
being healed

whilst back in Mozambique. Mandisa was unable to attend the burial or even know where her mother's grave is.

“The heartache and loss that Mandisa* has already experienced in her young life tugs at the heart of Care Worker, Khetiwe. With Christ-given compassion, love and understanding, she makes herself available so that Mandisa can cry and talk about her feelings. Feeling safe in the love shown to her, Mandisa trusts Khetiwe implicitly, secure in the knowledge that she has her best interests at heart, and that she is free to share what she is feeling.

At 14 years old, Mandisa is all-too-familiar with life's hardships. She was born in Mozambique but moved to South Africa with her mother to stay with her grandparents in Mafambisa, leaving her three older sisters behind. Missing them terribly, Mandisa turned to her three orphaned cousins, who she now lives with, as playmates, but she has never forgotten the bond that she felt with her sisters. Tragedy struck the family when Mandisa's mother became ill, eventually returning to Mozambique. Mandisa sadly never saw her mother again, as she died

The trauma of those years was compounded by the silence surrounding the subject of her mother's death. With no one encouraging her to talk about her feelings, and any mention of her sisters being met with silence or anger, Mandisa carried the weight of her loss alone, burdened by grief and unable to find an outlet for her emotions.

These days, however, when Mandisa attends the Care Point she has at last been able to express her feelings. With the space to be listened to, and the freedom to cry whenever she needs, Mandisa is slowly being healed. The weight of her trauma is being lifted, and, as Khetiwe watches her running around with her friends, she can visibly see the difference in her. It is with a huge Hallelujah that Khetiwe can praise God for the love that He has channelled through her to Mandisa, and she continues to pray that Mandisa may feel God's comfort and love, and experience full healing.