

Dear friends of the Foundation House of Encouragement

Over the past few years, we have written about individual children from time to time in our newsletters. Since the Lesedi-Potlana Centre opened in 2011, we have been able to care for over 200 orphans and support them in their personal development. The community at the centre has contributed to an important sense of identity and belonging for the children. Currently Michael is the oldest and Sanele the youngest, Pachelo has been with us the longest at 12 years and Mohau has been with us for only a month.



These are not distant, nameless faces, but children and families we know personally and who have become part of our extended family. We celebrate with them when they succeed, and we walk alongside them when they face struggles and challenges.

At 20, Michael Masemola is the oldest of the children and, despite his age, he is a regular participant at the center. Today, he is a role model for the younger boys and also takes great care of the little ones. After a few years of difficulties at school, he has been concentrating on his studies since grade 8 and hopes that by completing grade 12 well, he will be able to pursue his career aspirations - a career in the military. Alternatively, he would also like to train as a chef.

Sanele Mokoena has just turned five and goes to the kindergarten. She is the youngest of seven children, three of whom are with us at the center. Five are still at school in different places. The eldest sister, Noxolo, 24 years old and unemployed, has been responsible for all of them since the traumatic death of their mother in May last year.

They live in a corrugated shack and a small brick house in very limited space.



Noxolo

Noxolo receives state subsidies for the five children who still go to school. Fortunately, a next-door neighbour uses the space in Noxolo's yard for a hairdressing salon, which provides her with an additional CHF 25.00 per month.

Being a member of the center family together with two of her sisters gives Sanele stability and security.

Pachelo Tchizondo has been at the centre since 2013, making him the longest participant. He lives with Mrs Muraro, who we wrote about in 2017. Thetiwe Morare still looks after the 7 children, now aged 11 to 19, who were referred to her by the social services. Recently a 3-month-old baby was added. She is a very loving foster mother and



*Frau Muraro*

cares for the children with all her possibilities. It is important to her that the children learn about the Christian faith. She prays for the children every day and encourages them to work hard for school. She is proud of Pachelo, who she says is on the right path. Pachelo is very creative, and his greatest wish is to become an architect.

Mohau Makgopa came to our centre only two months ago. He lived with his grandmother but when she passed away a few months ago, he asked his uncle, who is now taking care of him, if he could come to the House of Encouragement Center. Over the past few weeks, he has settled in very well and has made good contact with the caregiver team. He seems to be enjoying this extra support at the present time.

All the children at our centre are unique and special. They share the hope for a future that will enable them to contribute to improving the lives of the underprivileged in their communities.

South Africa is not one of the poorest countries, but it still has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world at 31.9%. According to the latest Labour Force Survey figures, 17.1 million people are in employment, while 12.3 million are unemployed (2/3 of whom are long-term unemployed). Apparently, more than 3.5 million are discouraged job seekers, i.e. they have given up looking for work. Among young people aged between 15 and 24, the national unemployment rate is 59.6%, and in Soshanguve it is almost 90%.

It is therefore no wonder, that a lack of goals and prospects is already widespread among school children. This is where House of Encouragement comes in, encouraging the children to study regularly and develop plans for their future. As with all young people at this age, many do not know exactly what they want to study. But all of them would like to be able to pursue professional goals after school. Unfortunately, for financial reasons, they are mostly unable to attend courses or other education or training.

Sincere thanks to all those who make this work possible, for example by remembering our foundation on the occasion of an anniversary, a milestone birthday, when writing a will, etc., or by helping effectively with their regular donations.

Kindest regards,

Walter und Estelle Bosshard

Bubikon/Soshanguve, 15 March 2025