

Case studies

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Mbali is a 6-year old girl who came to South Africa from Zimbabwe after fleeing across the border with her family. She now lives in an area where many people don't like refugees from Zimbabwe, and because of this, Mbali's mother can't find a place in a school for Mbali. All the head teachers say that their schools are full, even though this is not true.

Answer: Article 22. Children who come in to a country as refugees should have the same rights as children born in that country.

After Mbali's case came to the attention of the village director at the SOS Children's Village Rustenburg, the village director went straight to the local school and demanded that they make place for Mbali, or he would move all the children from the SOS Children's Village who attend the school. Mbali was promptly given a place, and is now in her second year. Her favourite subjects are maths and writing, and though she still lives at home with her family, she can often be seen visiting the SOS Children's Village and doing home work with her friends.

Sophiso is an 11 year old boy who lives in the South African country side with his family. His parents are farmers, and keep cows. Every day after school, Sophiso heads out to look after the cattle. He spends all his free time looking after the animals, and sometimes he doesn't go to bed until after midnight. This means he is very tired when he's at school

Answer: Article 31. All children have the right to relax and play and join a wide range of activities.

Sophiso was quite happy living at home, but because the family was so poor, he had to work all the time. One day, his father visited the SOS Children's Village in Rustenburg to ask for help. The staff there told him that he should attend a course in farming, which he did. Sophiso's dad learned so much that at the end of the course, he could start growing vegetables to sell. This meant he could sell some of the cows, and Sophiso could finally get some free time.

Lucia and Ntomby are two sisters, whose parents have recently died. They don't have any other relatives to look after them, and when they couldn't pay the rent on the small house where they had lived with their parents, they had to move out to the street. Now, they sleep under a railway bridge in central Ennerdale.

Answer: Article 27. Children have the right to a good standard of living that is enough to met their physical and mental needs.

When staff at the SOS Children's Village Rustenburg one day spotted the two girls, they were immediately worried. After discussions with the local social services, it was established that there was nobody who could look after the girls. They were then admitted to the SOS Children's Village in Rustenburg, and now live together in house number 10, together with their SOS Mother Mama Grace.

Thabeloni is a boy of 8 years, who has cerebral palsy. His family is very poor, so they are unable to buy the special chair Thabeloni needs to make sure his spine grows correctly.

Answer: Article 23. Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support so that they can lead full and independent lives.

When Thabeloni's mother heard of the SOS Children's Village nearby, she visited it's Social Centre to ask for help. Luckily, the nurse there could arrange for Thabeloni to borrow a chair for free. She also made sure that Thabeloni's family receives food parcels every week, so that Thabeloni can eat the nutritious food he needs to develop.