

SOS Children's Villages Namibia Impact Report

October 2023



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**
CANADA

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SOS Children's Villages Namibia

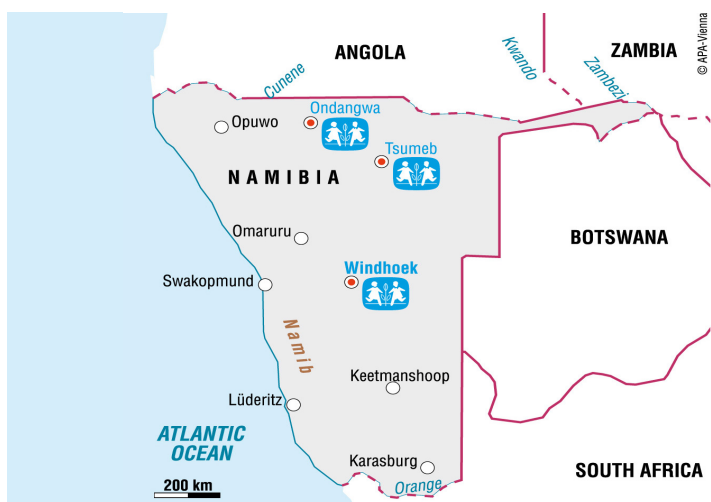
Located in southwest Africa, Namibia is a sparsely populated country of just over 2.5 million people. Despite its wealth in natural resources, Namibia is experiencing persistently high levels of inequality, with 65% of its population living below the poverty line.

Namibian children face high rates of violence, with 40% of girls and 45% of boys experiencing physical, sexual and/or emotional violence in childhood. Gender-based violence is also common, with a third of married women having experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional violence from their partner. Violence within the home takes a toll on women's and children's wellbeing, often resulting in mental illnesses and other issues such as substance abuse, dropping out of school, teenage pregnancies, depression and anxiety.

Low levels of economic activities in some of the country's regions, combined with a lack of access

to education (19% of children never complete their primary education and 52% never graduate from secondary school), are the driving forces behind high rates of unemployment, especially for youth who face an unemployment rate of 48% in 2023.

SOS Children's Villages started working in Namibia in 1984 to provide a safe home for children who have lost the care of their biological family and support vulnerable families at risk of having to abandon their children. Today, SOS Children's Villages operates eight programs in the country, including SOS Villages Alternative Family-based Care for orphaned and abandoned children, Family Strengthening Programs for extremely vulnerable families, an Early Childhood Development Centre, and Youth Empowerment and Employability Programs.



With a team of 86 staff, SOS Children's Villages implements development programs to support vulnerable children and families in three locations in Namibia: Ondangwa, Tsumeb and Windhoek.



In Namibia, many children are faced with challenges from a very young age that no one should have to experience. HIV/AIDS, inequality, extreme poverty and violence are just to name a few. At SOS Children's Villages Namibia, we support children beyond providing shelter and loving homes. We offer young people and families hope for their futures and empower communities. We work with the children and the communities to address their specific needs with programs to support parental care, education, healthcare, youth care, economic empowerment and much more. We are driven by our strong belief that each child deserves a loving home and everyone should have opportunities for a secure, bright future.

Sam Ntelamo, National Director
SOS Children's Villages Namibia



Our impact in Namibia



2,136 people supported by SOS Children's Villages.



985 children and youth were provided access to education.



328 families participated in Family Strengthening Programs – 1,237 individuals including 345 caregivers (283 women) and 889 children (50% girls).



40 families became financially independent and exited SOS Family Strengthening Programs.



236 children who have lost the care of their parents received care within the SOS Villages.



2 community saving and loan cooperatives were established, supporting over 60 members to save money and access financial services.



166 children and **88** caregivers gained knowledge on mental health, including where and how to seek support services in the community.



69 caregivers received financial skills training to improve their entrepreneurial skills, manage their income-generating activities effectively, increase their capacity to handle their business independently and access funding.

Our work in Ondangwa

Ondangwa is a remote community in northern Namibia, close to the border with Angola, with a high population of orphaned and vulnerable children. A needs analysis conducted in the community found very high household poverty rates, resulting from a lack of economic opportunities, formal skills training and education within the labour force. Extreme household poverty contributes to high rates of mental illnesses, substance abuse and violence against women and children.

Since 2009, SOS Children's Villages has been working in Ondangwa to respond to the needs of vulnerable

children and their families. SOS Children's Villages in Ondangwa provides orphaned or abandoned children with quality family-based care. A Family Strengthening Program in the Uupopo settlement works to empower caregivers and address the root causes of children losing parental care.

Our economic empowerment program helps youth and caregivers in the community with access to formal education, skills training, seed capital to start and grow small businesses, and more. We also operate a centre in the community that provides early child development services to 86 children.

In 2023, in Ondangwa

400 children and youth were supported to access education, including 32 youth who received assistance to attend post-secondary education (15 vocational training, 7 college, 10 university).

108 families (122 caregivers and 374 children) benefited from Family Strengthening Program services. 35 families exited the Family Strengthening Program after becoming self-reliant with their businesses in bread making, sewing/tailoring, snack shops and catering, amongst others.

86 orphaned or abandoned children received quality alternative care and protection.

67 women received economic empowerment services, including skills training and financial support for their small businesses.

54 parents and caregivers trained on positive parenting practices.

50 youth (35 women) gained employability and life skills through formal training.

14 caregivers and 32 adolescents attended learning sessions on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Caregivers were more empowered to speak with their children about SRHR issues.

8 youth benefited from internships in various industries such as nursing, education, tourism, welding, social work, and metallurgy.

Our work in Windhoek

Windhoek is Namibia's capital city and the economic hub of the country. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Windhoek's formal and informal economy was severely impacted, leading to a sharp increase in household poverty; those families already on the margins were hit the hardest.

A recent needs analysis found that many families in Windhoek's informal settlements live in extreme poverty without adequate shelter or access to clean water and sanitation facilities. These settlements also struggle with high rates of mental illnesses, substance abuse and violence against women and children.

Since 1984, SOS Children's Villages has been working in Windhoek to respond to the needs of

vulnerable children and their families. Through the SOS Children's Village in Khomasdal, one of the city's suburbs, orphaned or abandoned children are provided with quality family-based care. An SOS Family Strengthening Program in Windhoek works to empower caregivers and address the root causes of children losing parental care. The program supports caregivers with access to essential services for children's development, including education, nutrition and health support, social skills, and training on positive parenting.

Our economic empowerment program helps youth and caregivers in the community with access to formal education, skills training, seed capital to start and grow small businesses, and more.

In 2023, in Windhoek

600 students from a local primary school benefited from a school feeding program to improve students' nutrition and attendance. Food harvested in the newly established school garden is used to complement children's meals, while income from the sale of the surplus is reinvested into the project.

164 families (165 caregivers and 342 children) benefited from Family Strengthening Program services, and 47 families became self-reliant and financially stable and exited the program.

90 adolescents attended learning sessions and counselling on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) including sex education, contraceptives, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and STI prevention and treatment.

81 orphaned or abandoned children received quality alternative care and protection.

76 youth participated in employment and entrepreneurship workshops and gained critical skills.

70 parents and caregivers participated in positive parenting skills training.

60 caregivers and 32 youth received mental health counselling and gained deeper knowledge on psychosocial support and suicide prevention.

33 vulnerable youth were enrolled in post-secondary education and provided with the required materials to pursue their education.

6 youth benefited from internships in various industries such as nursing, education, tourism, welding, social work and metallurgy.

3 youth graduated from their post-secondary studies in human resources, tourism and midwifery.

Academic performance for children and young persons improved at primary and secondary levels with the provision of extra classes.

Women's economic empowerment in Ondangwa: Keulukuwa's story

When Keulukuwa got pregnant with her first child, she was forced to drop out of school before finishing her secondary education. She was being raised by her grandmother who could barely afford to care for her, and their household income could not afford to care for the child as well while also covering the expenses associated with Keulukuwa's education. With no formal education or training, Keulukuwa lived in poverty; caring for her child was a daily struggle.

In 2021, the young mother enrolled in the Family Strengthening Program and her future brightened. Keulukuwa and her child received immediate support, and a plan was made to ensure she would achieve financial independence.

The young mother was determined to pursue a career that would lift her out of poverty. She was supported to finish high school and then provided with career guidance. She enrolled at a local vocational training centre to secure an Air Conditioning and Refrigeration diploma.

With the support of SOS Children's Villages and the Ministry of Gender, Keulukuwa also received childcare assistance so she could pursue her studies without this stress.

A bright future through education: Frieda's story

At just 22, Frieda is on her way to achieving her dream career and is pursuing a Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety at a prestigious local institution.

Frieda's journey has been marked by resilience and hard work. In 2012, when Frieda was just 11 years old, she lost the care of her family and found her second home at SOS Children's Villages in Ondangwa. She was determined to catch up with her peers in school and made quick progress. She worked diligently and graduated from high school with flying colours.



The program offered Keulukuwa financial assistance to continue her education but also provided the emotional and social support she needed to balance her responsibilities effectively. Today, she is an inspiring example for other single mothers struggling to care for their families in Ondangwa, proving that education and ambition can thrive alongside motherhood.



The financial support she received from the Green Family Scholarship bolstered her academic ambitions this year, enabling her to pursue her post-secondary education and dream of a bright future.

Frieda is an inspiring example for others in the community. She proves that hard work, determination and the right support can transform a child's life and future. Regardless of their circumstances, every child deserves a chance to shine and thrive.



Thank you for your support!



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