

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

SOMMERSET COMMUNITY

SOUTH AFRICA | HAZYVIEW REGION

Volunteers from the local church in Sommerset have come together to care for their community. These Care Workers have identified the most vulnerable children and brought them into their care. Their dream is to bring hope to those living in extreme brokenness.

Sommerset is a tough community with many physical and social obstacles to overcome. For most children, the absence of a father is common, leaving a huge gap in the influence of healthy male role models, which in some cases can lead to abuse and a struggle with alcohol. Education is unavailable for those who do not have school uniforms, supplies and the proper identification documents. Other challenges in the community are a lack of employment opportunities, secure housing and clean water.

For many years Hands at Work was serving in the neighbouring community of Belfast. It was through this work that the community of Sommerset was identified and Care Workers rose up to care for the most vulnerable in this area. Daily life comes with many challenges, yet life is not hopeless. There are women from the community who care for the most vulnerable and poorest of the poor in a holistic way. At the Care Point, volunteer Care Workers from the Sommerset Community Based Organisation (CBO) give children the freedom to be children. Beginning in August 2015, they receive a hot nutritious meal daily, and support with their education and basic health care. Regularly, the Care Workers walk the dusty roads of Sommerset to visit children in their homes, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of a child's challenges and home life. Doing these visits enables the Care Workers to build relationships of trust with the children and their families and increase the care that they are able to provide.

The Sommerset CBO has its own piece of land and there has been lots of exciting growth happening over the years. In August 2016, an international team made up of people from around the world visited Sommerset and helped put some old tyres into the ground for children to sit and play on. They spent a few days with the children and the Care Workers helping paint and decorate the tyres. In 2020, a new Care Point building was completed, including a storage room with shelving, a communal area with benches for the children and the planting of 30 trees on the land, all overseen by Japhed, a community leader and board member of the Sommerset CBO.

Many of the children have built and continue to grow strong, loving relationships with the Care Workers, which means that the children have healthy and Godly role models to look up to. A local church in Sommerset has been involved with the Sommerset CBO, often coming to pray with the Care Workers and children.



Children Currently Supported **100**
 Number of Care Workers **16**
 Coordinator Name **Martha**
 Distance from Local Office **40km**
 Basic Services Started In **2016**