

HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

STHOBELA C COMMUNITY

SOUTH AFRICA | OSHOEK REGION

The community of Sthobela is nestled in the hills of Oshoek, alongside the border of South Africa and Eswatini. It is made up of people from Eswatini, many of whom do not have documentation, and people from a nearby province, KwaZulu-Natal, who have come looking for farming opportunities to provide for their families. Within these beautiful, grassy, rolling hills the air is cold and windy, which creates unique practical challenges for the community.

Due to the lack of employment in Sthobela, many people survive by ploughing their own fields for food. This is complicated by a lack of access to clean water and a short growing season, which means that providing for their families is always a concern.

Hands at Work recognised that Sthobela was a vulnerable community and that there was a need to expand care to this area. After walking in the community, Hands at Work mobilised volunteers from the local church to help identify the most vulnerable children and in 2014 the Sthobela A Community Based Organisation (CBO) was started.

Over the years, Hands at Work saw that some of the children being cared for at the nearby Oshoek Care Point were not able to attend during the school holidays, as they relied on the school bus to bring them there. Sthobela B CBO was established in direct response to this challenge, providing a Care Point that the children could walk to.

In 2021, the local Hands at Work team in Oshoek came across yet another challenge when it came to their attention how far some of the children were walking from an area known as Sthobela C to the Care Point in Sthobela A. The children had to walk across a river and through the bush, putting them in a dangerous position. As a result, local Care Workers were mobilised in that area, and the Sthobela C CBO was formed.

In July 2022 a Maranatha Workshop took place in the community for the Care Workers, which has helped to build their confidence as they take the gospel into their Holy Home Visits. The workshop finished with a special time of community prayer at a new piece of land, bringing together Primary Caregivers, children, Care Workers, and local Pastors.



Number of Care Workers **3**
 Coordinator Name **Nomvula**
 Distance from Local Office **6km**
 Basic Services Started In **2021**