

# HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

## WELVERDIEND COMMUNITY

### SOUTH AFRICA | HAZYVIEW REGION

Welverdiend is an extremely vulnerable community located in north-eastern South Africa. The community faces many challenges including unproductive land, poor job opportunities and a lack of support for the vast number of Mozambican refugees, who came to South Africa in search of peace and safety during the Mozambique civil war. Due to a lack of Identification Documents, these refugees and their children are unable to receive any services from the government, resulting in an extremely high rate of unemployment.

In 2007, Hands at Work was introduced to the community of Welverdiend and as Hands at Work leaders walked in the community, the vulnerability of the people living there was evident. Recognising the need to support the most vulnerable, Hands at Work began mobilising the local church and identifying key people within the community who had a passion for caring for children. One of the Care Workers mobilised was Thembi, who has been the Coordinator of Pfunani Community Based Organisation (CBO) since the beginning. While Thembi has two birth children, she considers the 100 children being cared for by the Pfunani CBO her own.

In addition to a hot, nutritious meal daily, the Care Workers are advocates for the children; helping to enrol them in school, referring them for treatment at the local clinic, and connecting them with Social Services in order to obtain grants and necessary documents from Home Affairs. With the support of Hands at Work, the Pfunani CBO is able to help ensure safe and secure housing for the most vulnerable children, as well as school uniforms and supplies on an as-needed basis.

At the beginning of 2016, a shelter was built and benches were installed at the Care Point, giving the children a safe place to sit out of the sun. There are a number of children attending the under-fives programme at the Care Point. Care Workers have supplies like nappies, Vaseline and wet wipes to ensure that the children are receiving the physical care they need, along with toys and books to encourage them to play and learn.

When an International team from Australia visited, they helped clean and paint the exterior of the building at the Care Point. The Care Workers had been desiring to do this for a number of years, and they were very excited! They took ownership of the project and together with the team, youth leaders and children, they enjoyed painting beautiful colours and shapes on the walls.

In 2022, Tembi left the Pfunani CBO to join the local Hands at Work team in Hazyview, alongside Angel, another former Care Worker. In response, dedicated Care Workers Phindile and Sharon has taken ownership of the day-to-day responsibilities of running the Pfunani CBO as coordinators.



Children Currently Supported **100**  
 Number of Care Workers **6**  
 Coordinator Name **Phindile+Sharon**  
 Distance from Local Office **110km**  
 Basic Services Started In **2016**