



ZMP enables Heather Chimhoga Orphan Care (HCOC) in Zimbabwe to provide and care for orphans and other vulnerable children until adulthood. See zimpartnership.org

Newsletter #2, April 2024

HCOC Provides Meals and Boosts Educational Performance in Rural Zimbabwe

Many children in Zimbabwe go hungry every day. According to UNICEF, in 2021 there were 6.3 million boys and girls living in Zimbabwe. Of those, 4.8 million were living in poverty and 7.7 % of those were orphans. A large portion of those live in rural areas such as where HCOC is located.

When HCOC discovered Alice and Samantha, they were living as a child headed household in a remote village of the Murewa District in rural Zimbabwe. They struggled to find enough food to sustain themselves and often missed school. Soon after discovery, they were enrolled in the HCOC orphan feeding program at their nearest school and began attending classes regularly. As a result, their academic performance improved significantly. Both sisters graduated from secondary and high school with top marks. Alice (the elder sister) is now a Fashion Designer while Samantha is a qualified accountant.



Impact of HCOC

We know that poverty, food insecurity, school attendance, and ability to learn are clearly linked. Since HCOC was founded approximately 25 years ago, the statistics in the 21 rural villages that they serve have changed dramatically. Feeding

programs have been implemented adjoining 3 elementary schools. The children enrolled by HCOC receive 1 nutritious hot meal every day. This alleviates much of the food insecurity among the children of the area, motivates the children to come to school, and improves their physical health as well as boosts their academic performance. Not only are children who are well fed healthier, but they are more able to learn!

UNESCO research worldwide shows that giving children access to good education reduces poverty.

Here are some statistics contrasting UNESCO research for all children in the poorest areas in Zimbabwe with children cared for by HCOC:

Children who complete primary education:

All of Zimbabwe=22%

HCOC=98%

Children who have learned to read by age 14:

All of Zimbabwe=25%

HCOC=100%

To date, 8 HCOC students (4 male, 4 female) have graduated from universities.

Another success story is of a boy named Jephther who was living with HIV. He was orphaned at a young age and was living with his elderly grandmother in a dilapidated one room hut. Jephther often went to school hungry and struggled to concentrate in class. After joining the school feeding program, Jephther's health and wellbeing improved significantly and he was able to focus on his studies.

With the support and encouragement of the HCOC staff, he is excelling academically and is now in his final year at the University in Zimbabwe. Jephther's success story is a testament to the transformative power of the school feeding program, which provides children with the opportunity to thrive and succeed.



Richard Kadyauta, HCOC Deputy Director of Programs states:

“As we look to the future, it is clear that school feeding programs continue to play a vital role in addressing the complex challenges of food insecurity, poverty, health and educational inequality amongst the orphans and vulnerable children of HCOC.”