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## A place to call home...

Shalom, shalom from South Africa! We have tried to keep everyone updated on our journey as God has transitioned us from Mozambique to South Africa (SA). In no time at all, we have fallen in love with our new home and new mission. We would like to take this opportunity to share our vision and some of the felt needs of our new home.

When we came for our initial visit to SA in February, the area which greatly captured our hearts was the overwhelming amount of abandoned children. Many orphaned and abandoned children are simply left at the local hospitals. The bare necessities of food and shelter are provided, but very little else. Some children and infants only wait a few hours or few days...others wait for years. And what are they waiting for??? A home. Consequently, one of the recent prophetic words which has resounded in our spirits was from our dear spiritual mom/mentor, Heidi Baker, ***“God is sending you to free the children from prison! I see many children waiting in prison....and God wants you to set them free and bring them home!”*** By God’s grace, that is exactly what we will do with your prayerful help!



The very simplistic concept of our children’s village is to see children-at-risk growing up in the love and security that a Christ-centered family provides. Orphanages play an important role worldwide in housing vulnerable children. We believe that families play an even more important role! From creation, God has ordained the family (the home) as the most vital setting for physical, emotional, and spiritual development and growth.

The vision is to see 10-20 homes being built to create a safe and nurturing environment. Each house will become a home to 6-12 children who will be identified by the local government welfare department and will be supported to live as a family unit with a parental couple. The house parents will be carefully chosen from within the local churches and community. Each house parent will make the life-long commitment to love and support the residential children as their own.

How can you help? **Pray!** Join us in earnest prayer this month for the new Children's Village to open (specific prayer points listed on the next page). We believe it is possible to take in our first group of children by July! In order to do this, our team has a mountain of work to do....so please be praying that God's supernaturally moves the mountain!!!

**Psalm 68:6 “God sets the lonely in families, He leads forth the prisoners with singing...”**

**Psalm 84:3 “Even the sparrow has found a home...”**

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# FOR HIS GLORY...



## Our new home:

Backdoor (*Mbonisweni*) is a poor black township in the province of Mpumalanga ('*place where the sun rises*'), the north-eastern corner of South Africa. Currently, South Africa is rated as the 59<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world – according to UN the life expectancy is 48 in a country where more than 6 million living on less than \$1 a day (UNICEF 2007). Many problems in SA today are rooted in the fact that until 1994 the country was ruled by a white minority government (the apartheid). Although there have since been democratic elections in the country, the cost of years of turmoil are still very much evident, particularly in terms of social disruption, poverty, crime & lost education.

Backdoor (*Mbonisweni*) is a prime example of this – suffering from poverty, underdevelopment, and a lack of education, employment and opportunities. A municipal report suggests 70% of the region is considered poor – with 30% living in extreme poverty. Housing consists of simple breeze block structures with tin roofs. Water is controlled by the provincial chief & erratic to say the least – a few hours every 8 weeks has been the recent trend. Infrastructure is very basic and unemployment in the region is very high. AIDS is wiping out entire generations (high estimates for our region say 1 in 2 have AIDS, low estimates say 1 in 4). The high numbers of abandoned children have exhausted the current social welfare system. At any given time, the local

hospital has 5-10 abandoned children in addition to the several special needs kids (some have been at the hospital for 3-6 years). Consequently, these precious treasures will be the focus of our new children's village. What a reward from King Jesus (Psalm 127:3)!

## Their new home:

The site for the new children's village is situated on the edge of the Backdoor community surrounded by forest. The site has 23 acres of fenced-in land with 4 fully built beautiful 3-4 bedroom, 2 bathroom houses. The land also has a borehole (provides water for the houses) and electricity. The land is also within walking distance to the local schools and Iris/PIH church.

The site also has another 43 acres of undeveloped land attached that we can use to sustain the village. We intend to talk to local business people in order to tap in to local knowledge on how to make the land work for us. Initial enquiries have pointed towards agriculture and cash crops as being one option. Such a venture would ensure that the village will someday be self-sufficient (and provide jobs)!

Please be praying for us during this exciting time!!!



## Children Village Prayer Requests (Phase 1 goals):

- \* Bring existing 4 houses up to standard
- \* Get NGO status (Iris South Africa) approved by local authorities.
- \* Get property rezoned and approved by social and health services.
- \* Identifying and training houseparents and staff (aunties, nurses, missionaries etc).
- \* Procuring 2-3 vehicles for transporting the children.
- \* Pray in funds for Phase 2 (building 5 more houses).
- \* Week long intensive training/Holy Ghost seminar for staff and houseparents before opening.
- \* Furnish and prayerfully dedicate homes.
- \* **Take in children!!!**