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**Dear friends of Kambuzuma drop-in center,**

We have come to the end of a successful 2023, this could not have been possible without your generous support and encouragement. Zimbabwe is still undergoing tremendous socio-economic challenges and like in any economy going through financial difficulties, children are the hardest hit particularly vulnerable children like the orphans under our care at the Kambuzuma drop-in center.

The Kambuzuma drop-in center is host to 85 children (eighty-five) from the Kambuzuma metropolitan in the city of Harare. This neighborhood is characterized by high unemployment rates, high alcohol abuse and lack of social amenities to support young people. We can offer a haven for the children where they are able to experience the joy and innocence of childhood, receive educational support, psychosocial support, and a place where children can enjoy being children without inhibitions. The drop-in center relies on support from people and corporates such as you our dear friend. Allow me to take you through how the support we received from you in the year 2023 was able to provide support to the children.

## **Introduction**

The Kambuzuma drop-in center is run as a drop-in center where children come in during the day and go and sleep at the houses of their extended family members at the end of the day. This is in line with the Zimbabwe National orphan policy six tier system which states that institutionalization of orphans is a last resort. Where possible, institutions such as orphanages and support organizations with similar mandate should give children support while they are staying with their immediate family extended family or natural community. This is what we strive to do as the Kambuzuma drop-in center to provide support for the children while they remain close to family ties.

To do so we provide the following services.

- Education support
- Nutritional support
- Psychosocial support
- Family support
- Skills training

## **Educational support,**

The center managed to provide school uniforms and school fees for a total of 40 children in 2023 as well as two children who are doing tertiary education. The local schools have been facing various systematic challenges, due to the low salaries many teachers in the high-density areas have not been consistently attending class. This prejudices the children from the high-density area during the national exams as

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they are often lagging. To counter this, we have an after-school learning programme, we have a full time inhouse teacher that teaches the children at the center and provides them with support. She monitors their homework and assists them with their reading. Since she has been a part of the center, we have seen an 84% improvement rate in the general schoolwork. After school support also provides supervision for homework which these children would not generally receive from their extended family as they.



*School area and one on one study sessions with teacher Simbi*

## Nutritional support

Since the Covid pandemic, some of the guardians that take care of our children have not recovered financially. Without our support, some of these families are unable to feed themselves and the extended pressure of the orphaned children means they are susceptible to hunger. We provide all the children at least two meals a day and where there is need, we also provide food packs to support the extended family where these children come from so that the extended family does not alienate the orphan in their care because they are getting support, and the rest of the family is not. Our mandate when we provide support to the children is to **“DO NO HARM”** so we try as much as possible to create balance in the family and not to create superiority in the guardian’s household.

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In 2023, we provided food daily to 85 children and provided food packs once a month to 65 families. These families were given this support when the conditions warranted such a support to be given. The good nutritional support also reflected positively in the children because that meant that we did not have any nutritional related health challenges and all the children on medication took their medication successfully.

### Psychosocial support

Annually we take our children on a trip where they get to have a holiday experience. Traditionally we have taken them to Chivero lake for an annual excursion however in 2023 we took them to a new place in Goromonzi District called Pokugara resort. Our children managed to play various games such as volleyball, mini golf. Canoeing and swimming the older ones went zip lining. This was a breath of fresh air. Exposure to new things is greatly inspiring as it allows one to dream big and allows the children to experience a life full of possibilities. We managed to go with 40 children to this excursion judging from the experience, we will most likely return there again in 2024.

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*Post excursion photo and photo with Linda Kleemann from the KAITE Verein*

To inspire the children at the center to work harder, we also allow the older children who are at the university to interact with the children at the center giving them tips on how they studied and also serving as tangible and “real” examples that they can make it out of their difficult situations. Sean Tavhera is one of the centre children who is doing his final year at the University of Zimbabwe who regularly comes with some school mates for chats with the children.



*Sean Tavhera and some University of Zimbabwe children and group conversations with shamiso*

## Family Support

Apart from the Support that we give the children, we also provide an extra layer of support to the children through the psychosocial support. The children receive counselling and their extended family

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receive home visits from the center. The purpose of the home visit is to always maintain a bridge between the center and the families where the children come from. We believe that we are “co-parenting” with the extended family, and we rely on communication so that we can adequately support the children who come to the center. Each child received a minimum of 12 home visits this year and special attention was given to households that had children that needed special attention. This support helped us stay connected with families and address any challenges that may be emanating from the homes in real time.



*Shamiso talking to parents with Malnourished children*

## Skills support

We have continuously taught the children to grow their own food in our little organic garden that is at the center. We believe that knowing how to grow your own food is a necessary skill to have and teaching them how to grow their food using organic methods is not just financially beneficial but is also beneficial when it comes to preserving the environment. In 2023 we started to also work with the more artistically inclined to harness their art skills to make crafts using recycled material. We will be doing more of the art related activities in 2024 so that there is a skill that the children have that can also earn them an income potentially.

## Through your support we managed to;

1. Feed 85 children twice a day
2. Support 65 families
3. Have an annual excursion with 40 children.
4. Pay school fees for 40 children.
5. Provide psychosocial support to 85 children.

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6. Keep 85 children healthy and safe.
7. Have one Christmas party with the children at the centre.
8. Provide extra lessons for 85 children.
9. Buy school uniforms for 40 children
10. Increase learning abilities of 85 children by 40%

The future we hold so dearly for our children is shaped by how we take care of other people's children for it is building and supporting children that we have a stronger society. Thank you so much for the work that you poured into us in 2023, the financial support, the moral support helped boost us and keep us strong. We could not have done it without you.



Here is wishing you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous year 2024 from the Kambuzuma-drop-in-centre.

With Regards

Shamiso Mungwashu and the rest of the Kambuzuma team