

# What does it mean to live as an OVC in Swaziland? demonstrated on a biog- raphy.

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## 1 Preface

The world is in constant change. As globalization continues, cultures and their living standards and customs modify and adapt. I am concerned about the current changes in developing countries as it differs from the development in advanced nations. Society in developing countries has to face different and rather difficult issues. For instance, for people living in industrialized countries access to education is granted, however in developing countries it is a privilege not every child is able to enjoy. Some problems draw a lot of attention to themselves but they often move to the background and out of people's minds, eventually. For example, as the AIDS situation has improved the news stopped talking about it in a great extent, thus not a lot of people draw attention to the lasting effects like the orphan crisis. In fact, whenever I contacted the NGO *Sahee* in Davos I was reminded of this problem. I sought the cooperation with them with the hope of gaining deeper insight into their projects and of participation in one. One of their projects in cooperation with the Moya Centre, an organization supporting vulnerable children, operating in the community Mahlanya in Swaziland, appealed to me immediately. According to the information provided by Cyril Alther the manager of *Sahee*, Moya's vision and approach of supporting vulnerable children in Swaziland is progressive and sustainable as they try to strengthen Swaziland's future. The project filled me with enthusiasm and I got the privilege to talk to staff and contrive a biography of a sponsored child. Since I am very passionate about learning of different cultures and interacting with their people this seems like the perfect project for me. Additionally, I see a great opportunity in the fact that I am able to introduce this issue of the orphan situation in Swaziland and Moya's project to people in the course of his extended essay.

## 2 Introduction

This extended essay will discuss what it means to live as an OVC (Orphaned and Vulnerable Child) in Swaziland. The biography of a girl named Nothando Khumalo, an OVC sponsored by the Moya Centre, will be used as an example. The goal of this paper is not to be representative for all cases of OVCs but to provide an insight into an OVC's life and bring it to people's attention. An objective and qualitative study is, therefore, suitable to achieve this goal, rather than a quantitative study. I will now proceed to introduce some of Swaziland's demographic data in order to give a broad vision of the country's situation.

Swaziland is with a population of only 1,305,533 (NATICC, 2016: 4) the smallest country in the southern hemisphere. The population is 78.7 per cent rural and extremely young, with 58 per cent of the population being between 0 and 24 years old.

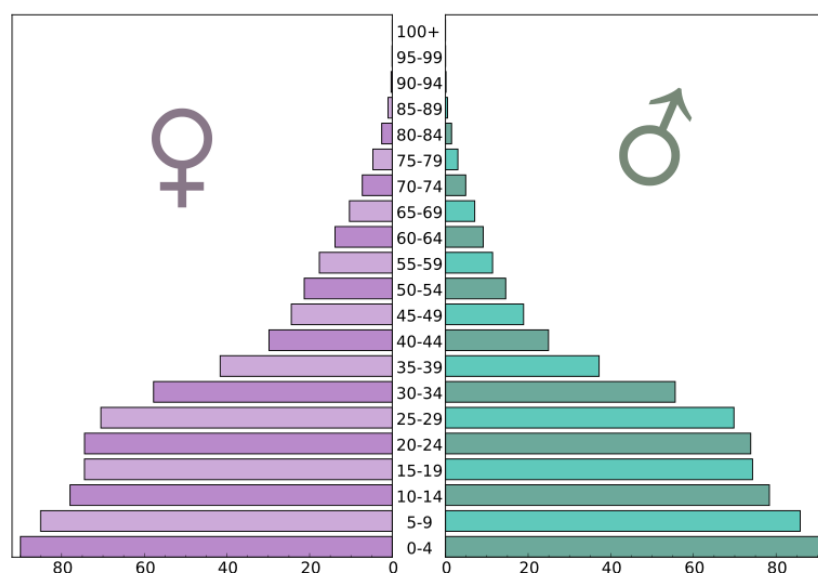


Figure 2.1: The distribution of males and females in Swaziland in terms of age groups (esa.un.org)

The focus of this paper lies with Nothando's way of life in Swaziland. As an OVC she faces extremely difficult circumstances mainly caused by poverty and AIDS. Swaziland has in fact the highest HIV prevalence with 26 per cent of its population being infected. In this lower middle income developing country 39 per cent of the population would require food support and the roughly estimated number of 130,000 orphaned children is expected to grow even more in future years. (NATICC, 2016: 4,5)



Figure 2.2: Geographic location of Swaziland ([www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com))



Figure 2.3: Map of Swaziland ([www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com))

In this paper, I will analyze different categories playing a significant role in Nothando`s life. First, the matter of education is an aspect that will be discussed. This concerns the multiple effects education has on Nothando`s life and on her future, as well as what access schooling looks like. it has on her life and future and how the access to it looks like. Additionally, her own attitude towards school will be considered. Second, her social life and how she is integrated into family, friends and the local community will be a part the paper. The focus on her social life is vital to assess the activities during her leisure time. Third, this paper will consider the gender roles in Swaziland, since they affect the social position as well as abilities and possibilities of an individual within Swazi society. Since someone`s surroundings and

the role of the guardian have a great impact on the situation at home and on a child behavior these two aspects will be considered in the evaluation of Nothando's biography. As mentioned earlier HIV is a serious issue in Swaziland. It is one of the main reasons why there are so many orphaned and vulnerable children in this country. Therefore, it is crucial to understand what position HIV and access to medical care have in Nothando's life. The non-governmental organization (NGO) Moya Centre is unarguably part of Nothando's life. The support it provides her with makes a great difference in her life, as it for instance ensures her education. That is why, there will be a section evaluating in how far the organization has an influence on Nothando's well-being. In this part of my paper the Moya Centre itself will be studied. Finally, the role of the government in the Moya community and its engagement with social issues in Swaziland in general will be analyzed.

In order to fully evaluate these sections in Nothando's life and to be informed about the backgrounds, more than only one biography is needed to ensure wider view on the situation in Swaziland. Two additional interviews, one with a voluntarily working caregiver named Sophie, and one with the manager, Ann Huysmans, will complete the picture and provide different perspectives. Questionnaire answered by a full-time staff member, the education officer provides more detailed answers and facts. To complete the data set, specialist literature was consulted as it delivers knowledge about the categories which will be explained in this essay. These three methods of gaining information form a solid basis of knowledge, which enables me to answer the question of what it means to be an OVC in Swaziland with respect to Nothando's situation. By applying and comparing the background knowledge to her specific example the data will be evaluated.



Figure 2.4: Nothando Khumalo ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com))



Figure 2.5: Caregiver Sophie Sibandza (provided by Ann Huysmans)

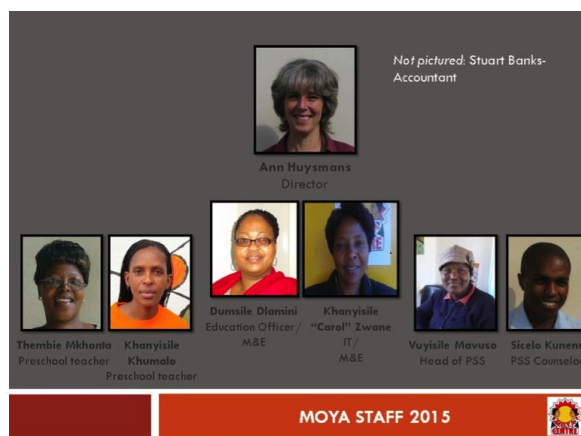


Figure 2.6: Moya Staff Collage (provided by Ann Huysmans)



### 3 Main Part

#### 3.1 Education

Nothando is 20 years old and attends the 12th grade at Lobamba Lomdzala the local high school. The school schedule is similar to the local high school in Europe. She attends school from Monday to Friday. Additionally, the students have study groups on Saturday. She says that she has loved school ever since she was in primary, simply because of the fact that she is able to go to school and learn there. At the local high school, it provides her the chance to become something good in the future. She says that this is the most vital part of school to her. However, her positive attitude is not common among vulnerable children declares Ann the project manager.

Sometimes students miss school for different reasons, the most frequent ones being family problems or pregnancy. On a national level the dropout rate due to pregnancy reached its peak at 42 per cent in 2013. (NATTIC, 2016: 8) According to Sophie`s report, many students also have problems at school. Especially boys seem to struggle. The lack of support by another person makes a big difference on attendance. This is why caregivers like Sophie Sibandza try to encourage the children to go to school regularly.

In addition to social reasons also financial matters can be a decisive factor with regards to a child`s school enrolment. Because students have to miss school sometimes, there are grades where students range from the age 8 to the age of 22. For their future opportunities, it is crucial for children to finish school. Success can only be achieved with education and hard work, which is a fact that Nothando herself stresses in the interview. As a very good student Nothando achieves excellent grades in most subjects. Whenever she happens to have problems in a subject her classmates help her. Nothando says that having friends at school is beneficial and allows her to have fun times. Not all of the pupils at the school are as ambitious and hardworking as Nothando. They have to be pushed more to study, explained Ann.

The relationship between the teachers and the students is of a more parental than formal nature. Nothando is comfortable with all of her teachers and does not dislike one. She finds that the personal relationship to her teachers makes her feel like home. There are no tensions between teachers and students. In Nothando`s case, the absence of tensions between her and the teachers can be explained because she has been at the same school for five

years, therefore she got used and closer to the teachers. She says that her relationship with the teachers is good because she is such an engaged student. When she first came into the school the teachers showed interest in her which helped her gain trust and familiarity to them. Whenever she has problems, she feels free to talk to teachers, especially to the guidance counselor. She can talk about anything and any problem. If there is a problem in class, she goes ahead and talks to the teacher of the concerning subject. She says that she is even comfortable with the head teacher.

The connection to the teachers which Nothando enjoys, is rather unusual. In general, it is known that in Swaziland teachers occasionally have sexual relationships with their students. The reasons for these cases differ: A student may hope to achieve better grades or they may be forced to have sexual intercourse. Age gaps are disregarded (NATICC, 2016: 22).

English is the second language the children learn in school, starting on primary level. Their native language is Swazi but Nothando explains that for her it was not difficult to learn English because they start at level zero.

In Nothando's class as well as in other classes at her school, there are a lot of other children who are sponsored by Moya. In total 167 of the sponsored OVCs attend a high school. She says that Moya provides major financial contributions as education is the key to the children's future. Without education, the downward spiral in society continues, as it leads to poverty and usually sexual labor. As a result, pregnancy or infection with HIV are often the case.



Figure 3.1: Lobamba Lombzala high school ([www.skrum.org](http://www.skrum.org))

## 3.2 Social Aspects

### 3.2.1 Social life and leisure

In the community of Mahlanya, the economic gap is very large. The rich are very rich and the poor people are very poor. Within those extremes, the majority of the people belongs to the very poor. Statistically 43 per cent of Swaziland's population live in chronic poverty (NATICC, 2016: 4). As Nothando belongs to the lower class of society her social life looks different than what we know from our western lifestyle. She has a packed day to day life.

Her typical day looks like what is described in the following: She gets up at 5:30. Then she boils water, using a gas cylinder. She baths and gets dressed. If there is breakfast, she eats, which is not always the case. She leaves the house at 6:30. At 6:45 she takes a porter bus to school. When she gets to school, the women who cooks there, hands out sour porridge every morning. Nothando loves the sour porridge. She gets up extra early because of it. She says that she wants to eat it without rushing. Classes start at 7:45 and then the children stay at school for the whole day. In between, they have a break at 11:30 for half an hour. Lunch is at 13.30. After eating they go back to class until 4. To get to the porter bus Nothando has to walk about 2 kilometers. When she arrives in Malkerns she walks again until she arrives at home. As soon as she arrives at home she washes her socks or shirts if she has to. She does her chores, like washing the dishes and cooking. Especially if her grandmother went to work that day she has to do a lot for the household. Whenever she is done with her duties, she is able to relax and recover a bit. Nothando goes to visit her friend Mikayla who is 21 and lives near her. She returns to her house to have dinner. Following she studies from 8 until 11.30 or 12. She says that it is worth it to study that much in order to do well at school. In the evening, she also prepares for the next day by ironing her uniform, polishing her shoes and setting her agenda for the next day. This way she is ready for the coming day. After she is done with her homework and everything else she goes to sleep. To revise briefly what she studied, she wakes up at 3:30. After she goes back to sleep until she gets up again at 5:30.

In her spare time, Nothando works at a salon as a hairstylist to earn extra money. During the holidays, she even works full time. With the money she earns, she buys things she needs for school and supports her grandmother financially. On Sundays, she goes to church and does things with her family.

In her leisure time, she likes reading. She reads a lot and always has a pile of books at home. The books she reads are from the school library and she reads whatever she can find. Nothando says that she is like her grandmother, who is passionate about reading too.

Ann states, that in Swaziland, it happens that a lot that children miss out on social connections. They often face absolutely regular problems a child faces at school. But most experience additional complications due to the difficult situation at home and family circumstances.

### **3.2.2 Gender Role**

Gender roles are quite different in Swaziland, since men tend to leave their families. Polygamy and gender stereotypes are widely spread. Usually men have children with several women, but they do not necessarily feel responsible for any of them. As the fathers disappear, or they do not provide any support, children are left vulnerable in more cases. In many families, therefore, there is no role model for boys, who shows them how to behave properly. Male figures are thus not asked for advice by adolescents and females usually fulfill the function of a role model. (NATICC, 2016: 22). This also applies to Nothando's case since the male figures of her family have disappeared and her closest role models are her grandmother and aunt.

In several cases for girls and women is necessary that they get paid for sex. The boys and men acknowledge this and know that women need the money, since it is usually them, taking over the household. Nothando also has to do most of the household. Since she receives support by Moya, works as a hairstylist, and is cared for by her grandmother, Nothando does not need to sell her body.

The caregiver Sophie states that boys tend to miss scheduled caregiver meetings or struggle at school and have social issues. They have to be encouraged a lot more to put effort in matters such as education.

Usually, it is the girls who are the ones forced to drop out of school. The two major reasons are pregnancy or the duty of being the new head of the household in an orphaned family. After a teenage pregnancy, the girls often do not re-enroll in school, because of the poten-

tial ridicule, especially from boys but also from the students and teachers in general. In contrast the boys experience almost no repercussions after making a girl pregnant. They feel like it is the girls' responsibility to make sure they do not become pregnant.

### **3.2.3 Family Situation and Role of the Guardian**

Nothando Khumalo is a 20-year-old woman. She has lived in the town Malkerns her whole life. She lives alone with her grandmother and has lived with her since the age of seven, when she started attending primary school. Before, she used to live with her mother who took care of her until she died from AIDS. She only met her father when she was in third grade. For fathers, it is very common to be absent in families as has been mentioned in chapter 3.3. The reason is that in Swaziland culture polygamy is promoted. Nothando has one brother, but she has no contact to him and does not know him well because she has never seen him after her mother died. She wants to try to find him as soon as she finishes school. She is going to look for him at their father's house because she knows he used to live there.

Now Nothando lives with her grandmother in a one room apartment under extremely poor circumstances. Everything is in the same room, from bedroom, kitchen and bathroom to living room. Nothando has to share a bed with her grandmother. This is not unusual, since Swaziland is a lower-middle income developing country and 43 per cent live in chronic poverty (NATCC, 2016: 4). Nothando still loves living with her grandmother. She says that her grandmother is more like a mother to her and she also calls her that. Because Nothando is growing up so fast they face challenges and also fight from time to time. But at the end of the day they are always fine with each other. Although Nothando says all these good things about her grandmother the situation is more difficult than she describes. Ann, one of the managers at Moya, brought up in an interview that Nothando's grandmother has an alcohol problem, and that it is sometimes very hard for her to look after Nothando. She is only able to work part-time as a domestic worker because of her health condition. Nothando has to support her financially by working in a hair salon after school and during vacation.

Nothando's situation is not an exception. Grandmothers who take their grandchildren in are common. They are usually the most loving. But the problem is that it is often quite hard for

them to take care of the child since they are old and have to in a way “start life again”. Often the caregivers face situations in which the guardians do not fulfil the tasks they are supposed to do for the child. Sophie says that the guardians would be able to do it but they find excuses like not having enough money.

Moreover, Nothando is very close to her aunt. Her aunt has graduated and has a degree but Nothando does not know in what subject exactly. Nevertheless, she claims that her aunt is very successful. Her aunt also has two kids, is married and lives in a wonderful house.

Nothando considers her as a real mother, too. Her aunt teaches her much about life. She tells her, that in life family is always first priority and that she should put her grandmother and family always before herself or anything else. She stresses that if Nothando works hard enough she will be able to improve her grandmother’s life, and that she should always believe in herself. Nothando finds her very inspiring and admires her.

It is very common for Swazis to value family to an extreme extend. It is tradition to support and take care of each other. Due to this extreme family tradition only 0.25 % of OVCs live in orphanages. Usually, they are taken in by extended family members and sometimes receive then additional support provided by NGOs like the Moya Center (Guest, 2003: 41). It is very important that a child has a positive role model in the family and someone to talk to about personal problems. It might be that Nothando is ambitious because of the influence of her aunt. Resistance, abuse or neglect from the household the child is taken in is not an exclusion, however has a negative effect on the OVCs life and sometimes leads to a disorientation.

### 3.3 Medical Aspects

#### 3.3.1 HIV Situation

HIV plays a major role in Swaziland. Especially the orphan situation, health care, politics and education are affected. As mentioned Swaziland has one of the highest HIV prevalence. A lot of parents die from HIV and it affects children as well. Currently 2 of the by Moya supported children are infected themselves. A lot of women take Neviraphine during the pregnancy to avoid passing on the virus to the child. Indeed, Neviraphine has helped improving the HIV situation in Swaziland.

Nothando states that HIV is a major topic everywhere, especially at school in guidance class where they discuss the period of life during High School. Discussed are topics like HIV and how students can take care of themselves. Nothando says that a significant problem is the people at her age. The virus is quite common in this generation because they are sexually active with multiple partners. They think it is sufficient to just be allowed to have fun, and they become careless. Girls often refuse to abstain or use a condom because they are afraid that the guys will laugh at them. They think that if the other person is young too, they probably do not have the virus yet. But sometimes a person has been carrying it since birth or the partner is affected already. This way the virus is transmitted. Most of the adolescents are afraid of testing, which enhances the spreading of the virus.

In Nothando`s view the classes could help to prevent the virus and misbeliefs about it from spreading further, but only if the people have the right mindset. Knowledge about HIV is the key point in this matter. It is very important that an adolescent has the possibility to talk to a person they trust. For HIV to be prevented from being transmitted the attitude towards contraceptives has to change along with public access to knowledge.

Caregivers talk openly to the children about AIDS. Particularly how to behave to avoid to an infection. Discussions like these take place with the older OVCs.

Nothando`s views on this matter are thoughtful. Many misconceptions are promoted and spread but the government and organizations try to promote contraceptives and offer education. It is a long process for society to be accustomed with this change since it is sometimes seen as a lack of trust to use contraceptives by a partner because this shows suspicion of HIV. The access to contraceptives has to be facilitated and to be more affordable, especially since most adolescents start becoming sexually active already at the estimated age of 8 for girls and 11 for boys (NATICC, 2016: 23).

### **3.3.2 Access to Medical Care**

Children in Swaziland are often traumatized. They seem to have anger in them because they are still in the process of healing. There, caregivers step in and try to provide psychological support. In such a situation Sophie, for example, tells the OVC to try to accept the situation and to talk about it. She tries to help them like this so that they can stand on their own



someday. This kind of psychological support and counselling is also provided for the guardians. If there is additional care needed Moya refers to Domestic Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences department of the Police, Social Welfare Offices and the Psychiatric Hospital for more therapy and counselling in Swaziland.

Moya provides medical care as per need to sponsored and other children in the community, sometimes their parents are also supported with medical fees.

### 3.4 Impact of the Moya Centre

Sustainable, guaranteed well-being of the children is the main focus of Moya. The organization is run by an advisory board consisting of five trustees. There is a board that is responsible for AIDS education. Three main interventions have been established to achieve Moya's goals in the last years: Parenting, Kids Clubs and Backyard Gardening.

Parents or guardians receive support by Moya throughout its parenting intervention. Parents are encouraged to take responsibility and learn how to appropriately take care of a child and how to respect it. Potential dangers like alcohol consume and violence are discussed as well. Moya itself runs three preschools, also called Kids Clubs where the children are encouraged to socially integrate themselves. Their social competence is challenged and a healthy diet is encouraged. Backyard Gardening is another project supporting a healthy diet. The guardians learn how to grow vegetables from permacultures on their own.



Figure 3.2: Kids Club with healthy snack (Photo disk provided by Cyril Alther)



Currently there are 177 children sponsored, who all attend high school. It is a bit more expensive to sponsor them because they also have to pay for the books needed at school. Primary school is free of charge. Only the uniforms or similar items have to be paid for primary students. Additionally, there are 75 children sponsored who are still in preschool.

All of the children are taken care of by caregivers who support them in their social life. Moya decides on sponsoring via applications. The due date is always in September. The schools and community know about Moya and sometimes encourage children to apply. To be considered for the program, a child has to show a birth certificate, death certificate of a parent and it has to be a clear need for someone to step in for support. It is very hard to choose few out of the many applications but there is only a limited number of available caregivers who can take care of the children. There would be no point of taking in more children because the support would not be as effective. One important criteria for the inclusion of an applicant is the lack or insufficiency of financial and psychological support by a guardian or parent. For example, this may be the case when a parent is sick and does not have the finances to take care of the child. It is a common thing that women struggle on their own behalf and thus, fail to take care of their children. Specially, since they have to work cheap labor in textile factories or in the industrial industry in general. They rent an accommodation and hope to experience improvement despite the bad-paid jobs.

Nothando is involved with Moya since she was in seventh grade. She did very well in school but when her mother died and her father was not there for her, nobody paid her school fee. She tried to contact her father to talk to him about supporting her but then he disappeared. She thought that she could not attend school that year. Her class and head teacher then asked her whether or not she was going back to school. When they found out about Nothando's situation, the school contacted Moya and asked for a sponsorship. Due to Nothando's very good grades they made an exception and sponsored her, hence she was able to go back to school. Since then she has been able to attend Lobamba Lomdzala High School.

As mentioned earlier, Moya now pays Nothando's school and bus fee as well as they attend to her other needs as well, including toiletries, clothes, etc. Staff is also always available for

personal needs. For instance, if Nothando needs someone to talk to they are there for her, particularly her caregiver.

The Moya center is where Nothando obtains her uniform, toiletries and clothes for the year. She also goes there to show them her report and tells them how she is doing or what she is struggling with at school. Thus, the organization has keeps track of her development and it is possible for them to make sure that it is worth it to sponsor her. They provide the things Nothando needs anyways if Nothando was not doing at school. But Nothando wants to work hard for herself, she says.

Moya has an outreach program. Caregivers are placed in different areas of the community. From there they are looking after some of the sponsored children to improve their standard of living. Each caregiver has four to seven children for whom they are responsible for. The Moya timetable overlies with the school hours. The services Moya provides still go towards the school but due to the overlapping schedules it is rather difficult to connect with the children, except if the children ask for time off. The contact to Moya, therefore, relies on the caregivers. They usually live quite close to the children's homes and it is easy to connect with them. At Moya, they have been operating with this system since about four years.

An example is Sophie who has operated for two years as a caregiver for Moya. She is a retired nurse and voluntarily works part time at Moya. At the moment, she mentors three boys and two girls from the age of eight to twenty-one who all still attend school. She mainly mentors the children in their day to day life and their studies, so they have a good lifestyle and behavior. Sometimes mentoring can be hard because some of her fosterlings have a healthy social life, but others tend to get on the wrong path. In this case, it is hard for Sophie to schedule an appointment and to talk to them. Sometimes it occurs that kids miss appointments. Then she has to chase after them and try to encourage them to be more reliable. She describes her relationship to the children as close and trusting. The children open up to her whenever they face problems. Sophie also lives near to them, this way she can be there at any time. She usually visits them every other day. By counselling the guardians Sophie tries to make them aware how important it is to care for the children. Resources are a significant problem but the guardians have to be encouraged to make their best out of the situation.

Most important is the fact that throughout the Moya care system, kids are able to stay within their usually surroundings and are not snatched from their known life.

### 3.5 Government Involvement

In Moya`s situation the government is not involved to a big extend. It merely shows appreciation and confirmation towards Moya but does not contribute much financially. The royal family showed their support by donating luxury blankets to the center. Moya is known amongst the community and also connected to local authorities. In general, Moya is well linked within Mahlanya, especially with other organizations pursuing similar goals of protecting OVCs.

Moya rather receives funding by the business community, however local support is limited. Some institutions supply Moya with goods. For example, clothes from stock clearances or foods from food outlets. The largest impact have foreign foundations like *Sahee* which support Moya financially by making donations

## 4 Conclusion and Prospect

In conclusion, I can state that, throughout the process of writing this paper, I was clearly able to gain a detailed insight into the life of an OVC in Swaziland. Whereas I am providing a single example of an OVC in Swaziland. Thus, the goal not being to achieve a representative finding. In regard of the ambition to get a feeling for an OVC'S situation I analyzed Nothando`s biography. As a result, I came to the conclusion that Nothando is the exception to the rule. I came to this insight as I set her biography in relation to the gained knowledge from literature and other interviews. She is extraordinarily ambitious and positive. In contrast to her psychological mindset, her poor living circumstances and challenging life story are rather ordinary compared with the rest of Swaziland`s population. But she has not fallen into the downward spiral like many adolescents do. Moya`s support is crucial in her life, without a doubt, and it is able to ensure that Nothando receives educational, financial and psychological support. Moya provides Nothando with help to overcome the struggles she unarguably faces, like any other OVC in Swaziland. Despite losses within her family she still has her aunt as a role model. Her grandmother provides a suitable environment for Nothando only to a certain extent, as her abilities are limited.

I, myself became more and more enthusiastic about my paper during the process of working on it. The main reason for this was that I had the opportunity to carry out extremely interesting and informative conversations which increased my interest in the topic in general. On the basis of a wide range of sources I was able to judge and evaluate the information from the biography in amore differentiate way. Moreover, the Interview with Nothando was a great experience. It was very detailed, as she was extraordinarily open and talkative towards me. The language barrier and complications throughout Skype did not affect the interview as much as I expected and she also agreed to discuss more sensitive topics like AIDS with me.

The cooperation with Moya was very beneficial since it counts to *Sahee`s* partners for a long time. I was able to profit from this by experiencing already-built up trust towards me and an openness, as a consequence of my connection to *Sahee*. It would never have been possible to gain this much confidence if it was not for this relationship. The manager, Ann, was incredibly helpful. She organized people to do the interviews with me and put a great effort in

organizing suitable candidates. Due to her determination, I was able to carry out the interviews on time and received a well answered questionnaire.

I see possibilities for improvement in trying to finish writing a little earlier. In general, was able to do everything on time but I wish I would have planned more time for writing the paper. Like this I could have written it even more carefully and detailed. I was really glad that I created an extensive work journal but I see an opportunity for improvement in marking the sources more clearly from the beginning in order to be quicker in sourcing during writing the paper. Evaluating the material went well, due to a wide range of sources, and therefore, I retained a quite complete set of data. I think that it could have been beneficial if I had read more about Medical Care and Government Involvement since I would have had more information about these topics.

Looking forward, I would see a great possibility in carrying this study out further. It would be definitely interesting to travel to Swaziland and visit the center, the schools, and specially to meet Nothando. Experiencing the country and the daily life would certainly add another, deeper layer to the situation which would enable me to form further conclusions and increase the understanding of the situation of an OVC. Another very interesting aspect would be to interview another OVC and compare the two biographies.

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## 9 Appendix

### *Interview with Nothando Khumalo*

Nothando Khumalo is a 20-year-old girl. She has lived in the town Malkerns her whole life. She lives alone with her grandmother and has lived with her since the age of seven, when she started attending primary school. Before that she lived with her mother who took care of her until she died. She only got to know her father, when she was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Nothando loves living with her grandmother. She says that her grandmother is more like a mother to her and she also calls her that. Because Nothando is growing up so fast they face challenges and also get into fight sometimes. But at the end of the day they are always good with each other.

Nothando has one brother, but she has no contact to him and doesn't really know him, because she has never seen him after her mother died. She wants to try to find him after she finishes school. She is going to look for him at his father's house, because she knows he used to live there.

Her grandmother used to work full time as a domestic worker. Now she has issues with her leg and only works part time.

Nothando and her live together in a flat. Everything is in one room. They have a bed, a table, a stall etc. So, they cook, sleep and bath in the same room.

Nothando grew up in Malkerns and only went away to visit other family members. She is very close to her aunt. Her aunt has graduated and has a degree, but Nothando doesn't know in what exactly. Though she says that her aunt is very successful. She also has two kids, is married and lives in a wonderful house. Nothando considers her as real mother too.

Her aunt tells her a lot about life. She teaches her, that in life family is always first and that should put her grandmother and family always before herself or anything else. She tells her, that if she works hard enough she will be able to make her grandmothers life better, and that she should always believe in herself. Nothando finds her very inspiring and admires her.

Nothando attends the 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at "" High School. She is able to go to school because Moya pays her school fee. They also take care of her bus fare to get to school.

The school schedule is similar to the one here in Europe. She attends school from Monday to Friday. Additionally, they have study groups on Saturday.

She says that she has loved school ever since she was in primary. She loves school simply because of the fact that she is able to go to school and learn there. Also, because it provides her the chance to become something good in the future. She says that this is the most vital part of school to her.

But she also likes having friends at school and thinks that is fun.

The relationship to the teachers is more like they are the students' parents. Nothando is comfortable with all of them. There is none she isn't comfortable with. She says it is like that, because the teachers make her feel like at home. There aren't any tensions between teachers and students.

Nothando has been at the same school for five years, so she got used and closer to the teachers. She says her relationship with the teachers is that well, also because she is such a good student. When she first came into the school the teachers showed interest in her and that drew them closer. When she has problems, she is able to talk to them, especially to the guidance counselor. To them she can talk about anything and any problem. If there is a problem in class, she goes ahead and talks to the teacher who teaches that subject. She says she is even comfortable with the head teacher.

At school, she has only problems in math, because she isn't very good with numbers. Still, she says that she doesn't hate it and that the teachers are there to help her. Often, she also asks other students for help if she feels like she doesn't understand the teacher. They are willing to help her out as well. Her strengths are more in languages and literature. Based on that her favorite subject is English Literature. English is the second language the kids learn in school, starting on primary level. Her native language is Swazi, but she says for her it wasn't difficult to learn English, because they start at level zero.

In her class, there are a lot of other children who are sponsored by Moya and also in the other classes at the school. She says that Moya provides major contributions at her school.

She has a passion for children and loves talking, especially to her friends. She says that from school to the bus stop she could be the only one talking. Therefore, she is very interested in

teaching. She says that she feels like in Swaziland everyone does teaching, that's why her opportunities in this field are limited. Due to that she is thinking of doing something in the field of agriculture. There she likes, that she could become her own boss. She is considering agriculture even though teaching is her passion, because it shows that a person is a hard worker. Ann at that point draws attention to the possibility of becoming the business-women of the year, because in agriculture they award someone every year. You can tell that Nothando is very ambitious.

In her spare time, she works at a salon as a hairstylist to earn extra money. During the holidays, she even works there full time. With the money she earns, she buys things she needs for school and supports her grandmother financially.

On Sundays, she goes to church and does things with her family.

She also likes reading. She reads a lot and always has a pile of books at home. The books she reads are from the school library and she reads whatever she can get her hands on.

Nothando says that she takes after her grandmother in this case, because she likes to read a lot too.

Nothando got involved with Moya when she was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She did very well in school. But as her mother died and her father wasn't there for her, nobody paid her school fee. She tried to contact her father to talk to him about supporting her, but then he disappeared. She thought she couldn't go to school that year. Her class and head teacher then asked her whether or not she was going to school. As they also found out about the situation and that she was staying at home, they contacted Moya and asked for a sponsorship. Due to Nothando's very good grades they made an exception and sponsored her, so she was able to go back to school. Since then she has been able to attend "Lobamba Lomdzala" High School.

As mentioned earlier, Moya now pays Nothando's school and bus fee, but they respond to any other needs as well, like toiletries, clothes etc. The staff is also always available for personal needs, like if Nothando needs someone to talk to they are there for her.

The Moya center is where Nothando gets her uniform, toiletries and clothes for the year. She also goes there to show them her report and tells them how she is doing or what she is

struggling with at school. They provide the things she needs anyways, but Nothando wants to work hard for herself.

Moya has also an outreach program. Caregivers are placed in different areas of the community. From there they are looking after some of the sponsored children. Each caregiver has 4-7 children who he is responsible for. The Moya timetable overlies with the school hours. The services Moya provides still go towards the school, but because of that matter of time it is rather difficult to connect with the children, except if they ask for time off. The contact to Moya therefore is mostly throughout the caregivers. They are usually quite close to the children's homes and it is easy to connect with them. At Moya, they have been operating with that system since about 4 years.

Nothando describes a typical day in her life. She gets up at 5:30. Then she boils water, using a gas cylinder. She baths and gets dressed. If there is breakfast, she eats, which is not always the case. She leaves the house at 6:30. At 6:45 she takes a porter bus or an instrument cluster to school, depending on which one is earlier.

When she gets to school, the women who cooks at the school hands out sour porridge every morning. Nothando loves the sour porridge. She gets up that early because of it. She says she wants to eat it without rushing.

Classes start at 7:45 and then the children stay at school for the whole day. In between they have a break at 11:30 for half an hour. Lunch is at 13.30. After eating they go back to class until 4. To get to the porter bus Nothando has to walk about 2km. When she arrives in Malkerns she walks again until she arrives at home. As soon as she gets home she washes her socks or shirts if she has to and does her chores like washing the dishes and cook, especially if her grandmother went to work that day. When she is done, she gets to relax and sit down a bit. Nothando goes to visit her friend Mikayla who is 21 and lives near her. She returns to her house to have dinner. Following she studies from 8 until 11.30 or 12. She says that it is worth it to study that much. She also prepares for the next day, by ironing her uniform, polishing her shoes and setting her timetable for the next day. Like that, she is ready for the coming day.

After she is done with her homework and everything else she goes to sleep. To revise what she studied she wakes up at 3:30. Then she goes back to sleep until she gets up again at 5:30.

Nothando states that HIV is a major topic everywhere, especially at school. They have guidance class in school. In that class, they talk about the period of life during High School. Discussed are topics like HIV and how they can take care of themselves, because the virus is such a serious matter in the country. She says that a significant problem are the people her age. The virus is quite common in this generation, because they are sexually active with multiple partners. They feel like they are young now and are allowed to have fun, this is how they become careless. Girls often refuse to abstain or use a condom because they are afraid that the guys will laugh at them. They think that if the other person is young too they probably don't have the virus yet. But sometimes a person has been carrying it since birth or had intercourse already. Like that the virus gets transmitted. Because they are afraid of what would happen if they were positive, they refuse to go testing. Like that the virus gets spread even more.

Nothando has the opinion, that the classes do help to prevent that from happening, but only if the people have the right mindset.

*Impression of the interview:*

Nothando is a very positive and ambitious person. She is hard working and doesn't mind working so hard, because she thinks it will pay off. She appreciates the help provided by Moya. She was very open and also talked about more difficult and personal questions. I didn't expect her to be this open and talkative before the interview. But she proved me wrong. I was very astonished that her English was very good although she learned it only in school.

*Interview with Ann Huysmans*

Moya is run by an advisory board consisting of 5 trustees. There is also a board teaching about AIDS.

Currently there are 177 children sponsored who attend High School. It is a bit more expensive to sponsor them, because they also have to pay for the books. Primary school is free of charge. There only the uniforms or things like that have to be taken care of. Additionally, there are 75 children sponsored who are still in preschool. Moya runs 3 preschools. All of the children are taken care of by caregivers. Who support them with their social life.

Through applications it is decided who gets sponsored by Moya. The due date is always in September, the schools and community know about Moya and sometimes encourage children to apply. To be considered for the program a child has to show a birth certificate, death certificate of a parent and there has to be a clear need for someone to step in for support. It is very hard to choose few out of the many applications, but there is only a limited number of available caregivers who can take children in. There would be no point of taking in more children, because the support wouldn't be as effective and the input wouldn't be worth it. Important criteria are that, if the donor for a child drops out, or even if a parent still contributes some things for the child it isn't enough in some situations, for example if the parent is sick and doesn't have the finances to take care of the child. It is a very common thing that women are struggling on herself and trying to take care on a child on her own. Especially because they have to work cheap labor in textile factories or in the industrial industry in general. They rent accommodation and hope through the cheap jobs for improvement.

Moya takes care of the children's school uniforms, school fees and other things to support an OVC financially. But also, psychological support, love and care is provided by Moya within the community. Through caregivers who each has 5-7 children he/she mentors. That means, the caregiver checks up on the family regularly. In order to be able to help the family or child in need the mentors have regular conversations with them and encourage them to talk about the problems they are facing. If needed the caregiver asks questions as well.

At the beginning of the year there is a meeting during the holidays to reflect the situation. And the afternoon staff comes in every afternoon at Moya.

It happens a lot that children miss out on social connections. They often face to the absolutely regular problems a child faces at school additional complications due to the difficult situation at home and family circumstances.

Financially is Moya supported mainly by foundations from outside the country. Sahee is a very important donor, since they tripled their donations in the last few years to support child development and counseled early child development. Other foundations support Moya's` gardens and crops (Subkitcher), as well as a donor group who supports restorative justice and discipline workshops. (Solonfoundation)

55 institutions like Moya exist in Swaziland. That's the reason why Moya focus is locally. Locally the support comes from the Mr. Bliss charity, who is the main donor. The community is very appreciative and supportive towards Moya. But the local support is quite small. It comes mostly from the business community. And there is a place called whoolwords with a food outlet, but the sponsored food is of poor nutritional value. But some institutions sponsor left overs or donate clothes whenever stocks are cleared. The caregivers give their leftovers to the children as well.

Even the royal family showed their support by donating four luxury blankets. Ann said that it wasn't as useful, but showed appreciation.

#### *Additional information about Nothando*

She is more like the exception to the rule. Her granny has an alcohol problem; therefore, it is hard for her to support Nothando. They live in incredibly poor living circumstances. They share the bed.



*Interview Caregiver Sophie Sibandza*

Her name is Sophie. She has been one of the caregivers for two years. She is a retired nurse and works voluntarily part time at Moya. At the moment, she mentors three boys and two girls from the age of eight until twenty-one who all still attend school. Mainly she mentors the kids in their day to day life and their studies so they have a good lifestyle and behavior. Sometimes mentoring can be hard, because some of the kids go home and play but others also just go somewhere and are walking and hanging around. Like that it is hard for Sophie to schedule an appointment with them and get hold of them. Sometimes it occurs that kids miss out on appointments, then she has to chase after them and try to encourage them to be more reliable. Sophie mentions that problems like that occur more likely with boys. She has to be very strict with them. Some of the children do well at school but there are also ones having trouble. She has to encourage them to put in more effort.

Describing the relationship to the kids she says that she is close to them. They trust each other which is very important. The kids open up to her whenever they face problems. Sophie also lives near to them so she can always be there. She usually visits them every other day.

The job as a caregiver also affects Sophie's personal life. Sometimes she feels stressed whenever a kid faces a problem and she is really trying to solve it. A difficult situation she faces is often that the guardians at home don't do the tasks they are supposed to do for the child. She says that the guardians would be able to do it, but they find excuses, like that they don't have enough money. She just has to keep thinking of the child, because she never knows what is going to happen on a day.

The children are often traumatized. They seem to have a lot of anger in them because they are still in the process of healing. It happens that also other family members refuse to see the children. In a situation like that she tells the child to try to accept the situation and talk about it. She tries to help them like that, that they can stand on their own someday.

Sophie offers the kids to stay at her place to study or whatever, but it can be difficult, because it is too dangerous to go back home for the children by night.

Also, the guardians get counselling from her. They are made aware how important it is to care for the child. Resources are a significant problem, but they have to make their best out of the situation.

In the community, the social gap is very large. The rich people are very rich and the poor people are very poor. There is a lot of extremes and the majority of the people belongs to the very poor.

HIV plays a big role in the whole situation. A lot of parents pass away because of HIV. Sophie also provided medical care of two ladies who had HIV. But the children she is mentoring are all healthy. A lot of women take neviraphine now during the pregnancy to avoid to pass on the virus to the child. Like that the situation improved a little. Sophie also talks open and often to the children about AIDS. Especially how to behave to avoid to get infected. Especially to the older kids she talks a lot about it.

It is essential about her job, that the children are grateful.

*Fulltime staff member and manager questionnaire**Myself*

I am Dumsile Dlamini. I have worked for Moya Centre since July 2013. I am the Project Manager for the Integrated Child Development Project (ICDP) which is sponsored by SAHEE. I coordinate the ICDP which consists of 3 arms namely Psycho-social support, Early Childhood Development and permaculture gardens (food security). I also work as an Education Officer for Moya. There are 6 Moya partner schools, 3 primaries and 3 high schools. I live in the community of Lobamba Lomdzala (Mahlanya) where Moya is. I was born here. As a result, I know most families from the area, they do talk and ask about issues pertaining work even when I' am not at work. I try to strike the balance by always referring them to the office but one cannot prevent community people from seeking information. I hold a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Sciences, majoring in Public Administration and Political Science. My career has developed more in Public Administration than in Political Science. I have also taken short courses related to social development over the years. I also attend national workshops mostly hosted by the Ministry of Education and Training and other organizations dealing with education in the country.

*About Society*

The Moya sponsored children are spread through the community and are attending the 3 High Schools Moya works with. Social gap- the children are mostly having the same background as we sponsor orphaned and vulnerable children. A large number of children we sponsor are vulnerable. The parents are alive but they are struggling to make ends meet. They do piece jobs, seasonal jobs and work in the factory industry at Matsapa all earning minimal wages. Other parents are not originally from Mahlanya so they rent rooms to be near the factories. There are not a lot of influential families around so there is not much of a social gap. In our schools, most children come from the background mentioned above. Moya has helped many families in the constituency of Lobamba Lomdzala and surrounding areas so the community look up at Moya to help and support with their children. Moya does not only sponsor their children with school fees but also with food security for some families, emergency food supply, uniforms, stationary and counselling amongst other services.

Moya also empower the community parents to do more themselves for their children not to always look up to Moya.

#### *About Moya*

This year (2017), Moya sponsors 167 students in secondary/high school, 3 in primary school and 76 in the 3 Moya pre-schools, that is in terms of top up fees, stationary including school bags and uniforms.

Moya also support other children with school uniforms especially those attending the Moya afternoon club from the different primary schools in the community.

Other children in contact with Moya,

-Moya Afternoon Club- +/- 120 pupils (primary level)

-3 partner schools, primaries- 1344 pupils

-3 partner schools, secondary/high schools- 1871 students

-Moya kids' clubs- 200 children.

-Moya Youth Clubs- 203 youth.

All community children are at liberty seek help from Moya officers or Moya caregivers in the community e.g for counselling.

Age- children enter our pre-schools at 4, so the age range of Moya sponsored children is 4-22 years.

Languages- English and Siswati, mostly Siswati as their home language.

Loosing children- we do have a number of children dropping out of school although in the recent years it has not been a big number due to Moya caregivers motivating and mentoring children in the community. Last year they were 2 male students dropping out and this year 3 female students due to pregnancy had already dropped out of school.

Trauma- our PSS department do work on cases where children need counselling. Sometimes it can be family issues that needs reconciliation/ restorative justice Moya will intervene for the children's welfare and safety. There are also cases of physical abuse, sexual abuse and

parents neglecting their children. Moya also do referral with some cases to Domestic Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences department of the Police, Social Welfare Offices and the Psychiatric Hospital for more therapy and counselling.

HIV- At the moment Moya sponsors 2 children to attend Baylor Children's Hospital to get their ARV's and to be assessed monthly.

Medical Care-Moya provides medical care as per need to sponsored and other children in the community, sometimes their parents are also supported with bus fare and medical fees.

Certificate – All Moya sponsored children have birth certificates, however there is a big challenge in the community about certificates. Most children in the kids' clubs for instance do not have birth certificates. Moya caregivers are doing an advocate work in the community to register their children for same.

Public schools - all Moya sponsored children attend public schools.