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HOCIC envisions a well-developed child socially, mentally, physically, spiritually & emotionally with a high self-esteem.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD STATEMENT

The World is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the International Day of the Girl Child on the 11th of October 2022. For the past 10 years various international institutions have been trying their best to give attention on matters that affect the girl child and also amplifying the latter's voices on a global stage.

Since our inception in 1995, we have always strived to ensure that throughout our programming, we center on safeguarding the child from all forms of abuse, paying particular attention to the girl child as the most vulnerable. It is our mission to ensure the security of children socially, mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally.

The Self Help Group approach (SHG) is a program under HOCIC which is helping children through empowering women (mothers). Through this program, women are financially empowered to transition from their former state (which is usually extreme poverty) to sustainable mode of income generation. Through empowering the women, who are mostly caregivers, this program helps the girl child to evade being sexually exploited for basic necessities, such as food, clothing and good shelter. The SHG model enables women to not only be economically empowered but also provides a platform for females to be socially and politically empowered; which further cascades down to the girl child through role modelling.

Through the Food Security and Livelihoods Program, the Mafanisa Garden in Mafanisa Village Ward 4 Umguza District, has ensured that communities are able to guarantee food security within their families. Umguza district is highly beleaguered with illegal mining activities where it has been reported that most of the girls are being exploited by illegal miners locally known as 'ogweja'. Girls as young as 14 years have fallen prey to illegal miners due to financial need. It is common that young girls are found at mining sites selling various wares as a means of generating income for their families and in the process they fall prey to older men who have the buying power. The idea of this garden is for families to provide alternative sources of income which will deter and influence a drop in the number of young girls frequenting the mining sites. Furthermore, the Start Awareness Support Action (SASA) and Securing

Rights Program (SRP) is utilizing advocacy to help the girl child realize equitable rights, and empowerment. The two programs empower women with various economic and advocacy skills that are used in combating Violence Against Women. By raising awareness on Gender Based Violence issues, these programs create a safe environment where the girl child is protected against all forms of violence.

Our recently ended Safeguarding Children against Sexual Violence (SCSV) program through the Sista2Sista structures has committed towards educating the girl child on basic children's rights. An informed child means a less vulnerable human. Children that know their rights are less likely to be abused in circumstances that they can control. Using lifeskills training, Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights, the program has been pivotal in promoting positive behavioral change within the Umguza and Umzingwane district.

In conclusion, by advocating the girls' rights and allowing them to lead, the global world is giving a voice to the once voiceless within our communities. Greater attention should be paid towards the issues that affect girls and women across the world. That is the ONLY way we will be able to create safer spaces for them.

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