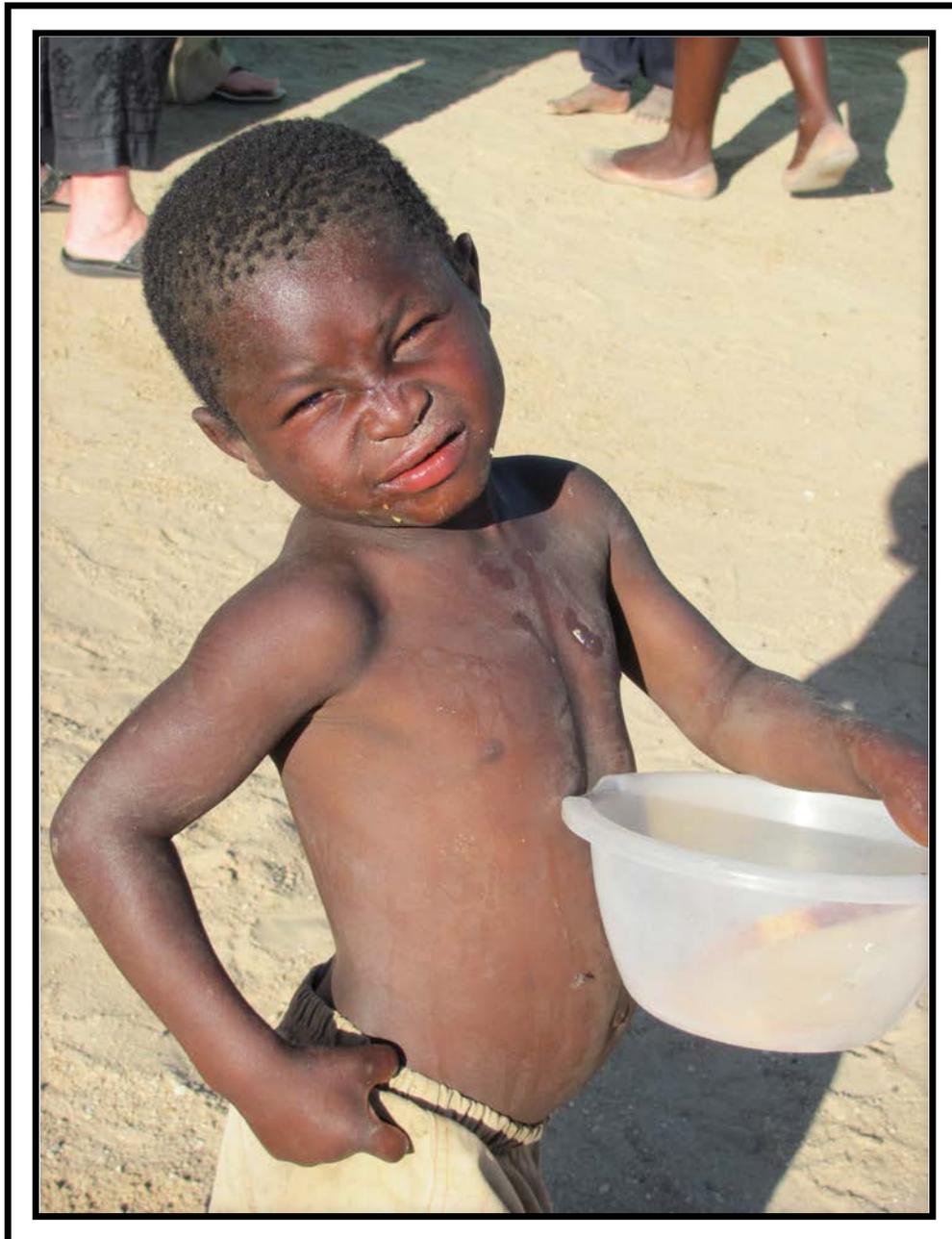


DRC
DEMOCRATIC RESETTLEMENT COMMUNITY
SWAKOPMUND





Swakopmund in Namibia is a wealthy city, surrounded with operating uranium mines, fishing and tourism that leads to an inexorable economic rise. Unfortunately, the income does not reach a high percentage of community members. Many live in absolute poverty and under unsustainable social conditions. The only way forward to a future, is to offer people access to education.

Most of the poor in Namibia mainly come from the rural area and poor household that are highly dependent on pension. At the same time poor are the ones mainly faced with the problem of access to proper public infrastructure. The highest poverty rate is mainly found among the San people (the Bushmen), Owambo, Caprivi and Kavango people, most of these tribes are found in the rural north and north-east of Namibia. About an estimate of 38 % people in Namibia are said to be living below the poverty line. The situation is made more critical by health predicament such as the HIV/AIDS infection which is among the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a prevalence rate of 20%, and reduces productivity, while life expectancy is 51 years. High prevalence of HIV/AIDS presents challenges with socio-economic implications among the poor, due to loss of income.

Large numbers of people living in the informal settlement, evidently struggle to cope with the present conditions. For instance, most Namibians living within informal settlements hardly earn N\$ 640 per month (USD 90). This harsh financial situation faced by a vast majority of the poor has made it difficult and impossible for households to survive.



Though, in some locations there are few services provided, not all can afford to pay for it. Due to these financial constraints, families cannot afford to provide their basic needs, not because they have chosen to, but because the current systems have made it difficult even for those trying hard to improve their existing situation.

Most of the poor, either come from the northern part of the country (mainly the villages), or were former ex-combatants, or "returnees". Moreover, majority of this people, especially those from villages had no or lack basic education and skills, and this makes finding a job a challenge, especially in a newly independent country like Namibia that is trying to find its way to development and dealing with the issue of poverty. Living in squatter for many people

means living in filthy environmental and bad housing conditions. Having a decent life and proper shelter is simply a luxury for most, rather than a necessity. In regard to this case, for many the only alternative left with is life in the slum, which is the only “affordable” option. People have no access to basic medical services, not because it is far from reach, but because they cannot afford it.



Shower/Toilet



Water- Point



Building Material

Poverty in the communal areas and the resulting depopulation are the driving forces for the increasingly accelerating growth of "informal settlements". It attracts more and more people from impoverished rural areas to the cities, but there is neither work nor sufficient (affordable) housing. Most of the newcomers end up in one of the many informal "squatter camps" on the outskirts of the cities.

DRC is informal settlement of corrugated iron and paper Matchbox's apartments, where more than 20 000 people live below the bread line. More than 70% live in unacceptable accommodation without basic sanitation and property rights. Although communities such as DRC were intended as a temporary housing project from the Town council, but the settlement has existed for many years and has no foreseeable future. There is still no power, no water connections and no sewage system, except a few central water taps and some "Longdrop latrines".

Due to no electricity in the area, candles are used to light up shacks. Often residents fall asleep, which promotes a rapid spread of fires through the shacks. Since there is no water connections, up to 20 families can loose their homes and belongings in one fire. This area is the poorest area in Swakopmund and desperately needs assistance to help them “upgrade” from poor rural living to urban life and a better future. –

The depth and breadth of poverty in Namibia contributes to the widespread impact of HIV, with the burden increasingly on young people. The number of orphans and vulnerable children is increasing dramatically as parents and caretakers succumb to the disease. The extended family is rapidly becoming overburdened and unable to care for these children. Namibia's population is young, with 70% of Namibians under the age of 30 and 43% under the age of 15. In Namibia alone, about 120,000 children under age 17 have lost one or both parents; about 57,000 of these children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

In Namibia, the adult HIV prevalence rate is 17.8% and a estimated 200,000 people are living with HIV. As the second most sparsely populated country in the world and the country with the highest income disparity, Namibia's HIV epidemic has significant and dire impact on young people. "The United Nations reports that the poorest 20 percent of Namibia's population earns only 1.4 percent of the national income versus the richest 20 percent of the population that earns 78.7 percent of the national income. Household food security and access to services are limited for the vast majority of the population."

In the six years since its founding, the DRC WOMEN'S PROJECT, DRC 'GROW TOGETHER KINDERGARTEN' and DRC SOUPKITCHEN has played a major role in the transformation of women and children in the community of DRC/ Swakopmund. With too many unproductive, unsupervised kids, the project became a valuable structured center. The Center uses the First Serve Life Skills Curriculum to *"empower women and children by providing art and craft skills, health and life skills program that promotes positive values, healthy habits, and education– resulting in real life power and out the Center."*

The DRC PROJECT (is a registered Trust) The Center is consistent with the mission and interest of the community of DRC. The Center has gained a positive reputation for providing constructive activities that contribute to reducing crime and illicit activity, increasing academic performance, and providing life skills to ensure success in the community and in life.



Mother Care



Planting



Traditional Dances

DRC WOMEN'S PROJECT

The Project was started on a non-profit basis in October 2010 to support the plight of many Namibian women that are unemployed and many illiterate, which is threatening their socio- economic future. They are taught Arts and Crafts from beads and recycled materials, which are then produced at the center and sold for an income. Women from different cultures express their skills in creating these craft to continue generating an income for themselves. Their handcrafted pieces of Art provide cultural like-forms reflecting the past and the future.

In support of the DRC Women's Project, a Kindergarten was created for the looking after and basic education of children of the women and the local community.



DRC GROW TOGETHER KINDERGARTEN

The educational world now knows that learning, and the development of intelligence begins in the first years of a child's life, and without this intervention, most children will never develop to their full potential, and will never be intelligent and well-rounded individuals.

Sadly, it has taken Namibia too long to realize this critical need for early learning, and it has been badly neglected nation-wide. Lack of early development can be directly linked with the high failure rate of students in their senior years. To combat the high failure rate at Grade 10 and 12 levels, government pours billions of dollars into high-school interventions, but surveys show that this money is largely wasted, and the failure rate remains unacceptably high. These dollars should be put into pre-school and lower primary development, but financial support at these levels is pitifully low in comparison. 54 children from DRC community have the opportunity to attend the Grow Together Kindergarten. Our main objectives are to encourage children and to promote them through teaching to attend schools. The children receive daily a hot meal, since for many; it is the only meal a day.



DRC SOUP KITCHEN

With the rise of the morning sun, most of us awake to a day of possibilities, but for those in extreme poverty daybreak brings only anxiety and despair as they try to survive on little to nothing

The worldwide increasingly a food price, parents with no work has affected many children that depend on the soup- kitchen. Often single mothers gather firewood from the rubbish-dumps to sell, to afford additional food. The DRC Soup- kitchen provides 150 meals to children of the community twice a week.

A vegetable garden at the project produces local and healthy ingredients for the Soup Kitchen.



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