



ZIMKIDS HISTORY

WHEN DENNIS GABOURY MOVED TO PUMULA NORTH, BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE IN 2005, HE WITNESSED A COUNTRY RAVAGED BY AIDS, CORRUPTION, AND VIOLENCE; A COUNTRY WHERE 20% OF THE CHILDREN WERE ORPHANS AND 90+% OF THE ADULTS WERE UNEMPLOYED. AWED BY THE CREATIVITY OF LOCAL CHILDREN, WHO MADE TOYS OF SCRAPS AND JUNK, DENNIS DEVELOPED A TOY-BUILDING COMPETITION FOR ORPHANS THAT LED TO A SHOW AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY. THE TOYS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS BACK IN THE STATES, WHO OFFERED FINANCIAL HELP. ZIMKIDS ORPHAN TRUST WAS BORN.

OUR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS ARE LARGELY SELF-FUNDED BASED ON THE WORK OF THE CHILDREN THEMSELVES. THEY MAKE DOLLS AND WIRE TOYS -- AS THEY DO FOR THEIR OWN PLEASURE -- WHICH DENNIS TAKES TO THE U.S. 100% OF THE DONATIONS FROM THE SALE OF THE DOLLS ARE USED IN PROVIDING DIRECT AID TO OUR ORPHANS.

ZIMKIDS TODAY

WE PROVIDE A SAFETY NET FOR 200 ZIMBABWEAN ORPHANS WITH EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, FOOD AND MEDICAL CARE. THANKS TO DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, SCHOOLS, ARTS ORGANIZATIONS AND COMPANIES, WE MAINTAIN A LIBRARY AND COMPUTER CENTER, OFFER TUTORING AND TRAINING IN WELDING, CONSTRUCTION, SEWING AND MANAGEMENT. WITH FUNDING FROM NIKE'S GIRL EFFECT, WE RECENTLY EMBARKED ON A SPECIAL PROGRAM TO BOLSTER THE INDEPENDENCE OF OUR GIRLS.

THE CENTER IS RUN BY OUR SENIORS, ALUMNI OVER THE AGE OF 18. THEY ALSO RECEIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND ARE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING INCOME-GENERATING PROJECTS, WHICH THEY WILL RUN. ACTIVITIES FOR OUR YOUNGER CHILDREN -- CHESS, CHOIR, SPORTS, DRAMA, ART AND TRADITIONAL DANCE -- ARE RUN BY OUR COUNCIL OF ELDERS, AGES 15-18, AS PART OF THEIR OWN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

ZIMKIDS TOMORROW

IN JULY 2012, ZIMKIDS MOVED OUT OF THE SMALL ROOM IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL INTO A CENTER OF OUR OWN. THANKS TO THE INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY OF DONORS AND THE HARD WORK OF OUR SENIORS, WHO LAID BLOCK, BUILT ROOFS, INSTALLED PLUMBING, WELDED DESKS, AND ERECTED SOLAR PANELS THAT POWER THE ENTIRE FACILITY. THE FACILITY INCLUDES AN ACTIVITY ROOM, LIBRARY, KITCHEN, TECH CENTER AND SPACE FOR VISITS FOR OUR DOCTOR.

IN 2014, THOSE SENIORS WHO HAD BUILT THE CENTER TRAINED A NEW COHORT OF 25 ZIMKIDS AGES 14 - 19 IN ALL ASPECTS OF CONSTRUCTION TO BUILD OUR NEW SEWING TRAINING CENTER. THE SURROUNDING LAND IS DEDICATED TO A SPORTS FIELD, OBSTACLE COURSE AND A GREENHOUSE TO GROW OUR VEGETABLES, ALL OF WHICH IS MAINTAINED BY THE CHILDREN. WE ARE PLANNING A PRE-SCHOOL BUILDING FOR 2015 TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR YOUNGEST ORPHANS.