



ST. ANTHONY CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

St. Anthony Children's Village, located in Ndola, Zambia, is home to 110 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), many with special needs. The Village runs nutritional, educational and sheltering programs for all those in its care, and is managed by a Missionary Congregation of Dominican Sisters, working in Zambia. As of May 2019, there were 61 boys and 49 girls.

St. Anthony's admits OVC referred by the Zambian Government's Social Welfare Department; most are either abandoned, sick or with special needs like cerebral palsy or hydrocephalus. St. Anthony's is one of very few facilities that accepts and shelters children with cerebral palsy, who are often neglected, even kept locked up with no food and care. Some children are admitted because they are either abandoned or born to mentally challenged parents.

SPECIAL CARE UNIT: The 36 children and young adults in the special care unit, ranging in age from 4 to 30, receive physiotherapy treatment from qualified personnel, and also from trained care-givers. With this daily physiotherapy treatment, their mobility is increased and pain is reduced. When relatively well, they are able to socialize and often play amongst themselves.

THE MENTALLY CHALLENGED:

St. Anthony's caters to all children in need. There are 25 OVC with mental challenges, ranging in age from 4 to 27 years old. The Village has tried to enroll these OVC in a local Rehabilitation Centre to help

them learn to be useful to society. However, this has not been successful as they need close supervision and care.

EDUCATION PROGRAM:

St. Anthony Children's Village runs a pre-school which includes children from nearby compounds to help our OVC grow up knowing they belong to the local community, and to learn to compete with others. As of 2019, the school teaches 76 children from babies to pre-first grade. Thirty-two of these are children from St. Anthony's.



REINTEGRATION PROGRAM:

St. Anthony's Village tries to trace the children's relatives, in order to reintegrate them into their families. However, it is very difficult to reintegrate those with special needs.

SUCSESSES:

*Children enjoy good health due to regular nutritional supplements and health care.

*Physiotherapy treatment is given to the special need kids every day, making them more mobile.

*Many well-wishers and donors support our work with the children with money and prayers.

*Loyal care-givers give loving care to the special need children and young adults.

*The children share their joy and love.



Despite their difficult situations, the children are resilient, happy, and appreciative of the care and love given to them through the care givers, donors, and well-wishers who visit.

CHALLENGES:

- Donor dependent
- Failure to plan an exit strategy for each OVC, as there seems to be no future for some children
- Generally, low academic achievement
- Adoption not possible for children with cerebral palsy, or who are mentally challenged.

GRATITUDE: St. Anthony's is especially grateful to the St. Peter Claver Society for its ongoing financial support.

May God richly bless you all,

Sister Lucia, O.P.

Administrator of St. Anthony Children's Village

