



Student at Thuso Centre laughs at Prince Harry's bead-work in December 2014

At Sentebale's ten year anniversary event in London in May 2014, Thuso Centre was presented with the Excellence Award for the provision of care, education and vocational training to children living with mental and physical disabilities in Lesotho. Prince Harry presented the award.

In 2008, Prince Harry visited Thuso Centre with a group of soldiers from the British Army. The facilities were limited and in poor condition and they lacked the specialist skills to help children living with disabilities. Since Sentebale made its commitment to supporting Thuso it has transformed itself providing efficient and effective quality care to these children.

The centre has continued to support hundreds of children living with multiple disabilities and has developed a graduate scheme, which provides vocational training in bead-work, tie dye, cooking and farming to name a few. Once they have graduated, they can return to their communities with income generating skills.

In recognition of the Thuso Centre's achievement Sentebale is building a much-needed sick bay and a new dormitory allowing the children more space.

Empower families and communities to provide care and support for Lesotho's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

CARE FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN PROGRAMME

Through this programme, Sentebale provides community childcare projects with capacity-building financial and technical support to enable families and communities to provide appropriate care, health and education to Lesotho's most vulnerable children and young people.

Key statistics

- There are over 488,000 orphans and vulnerable children in Lesotho.¹⁰
- 31,500 children aged between 0-19 years old are believed to have disabilities.¹¹
- Disabled young people between 11-20 years old are seven times less likely to attend school than those without disabilities of their age range.¹²
- It is expected there are many more orphaned children, or children living with disabilities who do not get counted in country statistics.

Programme activities

- 11 community-run organisations providing residential care for 1,121 vulnerable children received financial and technical support from Sentebale. These include children with disabilities and orphans.
- 240 children from Kananelo and St. Paul Centres for the Deaf received hearing aids through an initiative in collaboration with the Starkey Hearing Foundation.
- Four of the partners have developed strong outreach programmes; these entailed economic empowerment, family reunification, community based rehabilitation, facility-based rehabilitation and family mentoring.
- 517 babies at Touching Tiny Lives (TTL) who were severely malnourished were supported as part of the outreach programme, with food parcels and care for rehabilitated children under five and their families.

Key achievements

- Two visually impaired students participated in Paralympics Games in Russia and won gold and silver medals respectively; they are now enrolled in Secondary Education.
- Mants'ase has established a fully functional children's committee, a concept being shared and recommended to other partners to improve child participation.