

Year End Report



**Sometimes looking back,
reveals the beauty we
missed while in the trials...**

Registration:
Section 21 (Non-Profit)
No: 21/2013/0487

Welfare Organization
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Huipie van Wyk

Side by Side Early Intervention Centre

1/1/2023

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is with great pleasure that I present this year-end report on the remarkable journey of Side by Side Early Intervention Centre. The past year has been filled with both triumphs and trials, and as we navigate through the challenges, it is inspiring to witness the growth not only within our team but also in the children and parents who benefit from our programs.

In the realm of non-profit organizations, the ultimate aspiration is to work ourselves out of a job. The core mission of a non-profit is to ensure accountability within the community and ministries. To achieve this objective, we must uphold ethical management practices and continually pursue education. Non-profits play a vital role in guiding and empowering individuals to be responsible citizens. It is our duty to inspire others to become better citizens, demanding unwavering commitment to the highest standards of morality and ethics.

Managing a non-profit is no small feat, given the immense responsibility involved. Yet, when executed effectively, a non-profit can evolve to the point of obsolescence as communities adopt the values and principles we advocate for. As a non-profit and Welfare organization, Side by Side strives to empower communities, working toward a day when our mission of fostering an inclusive society for children with disabilities in Namibia is fully realized.

Our mission is clear: to create an inclusive society that caters to the needs of children with disabilities in medical, social, and educational aspects. With this goal in mind, we aim to facilitate easy access to services, education, and societal integration for all children in Namibian society. At Side by Side Early Intervention Centre, our ambition is to foster a strong and inclusive community.

While I believe that organizations like Side by Side will always be needed, we can aspire to a future where families can operate independently while still receiving essential support. I am particularly concerned about the ongoing struggle to support and understand the needs of children with disabilities and their families within our public medical industry.

With this in mind, Side by Side is committed to becoming sustainable and addressing the unaffordability of healthcare for children and young people with disabilities. The demand for our services is evident, with a staggering 131 new intakes evaluated this year. Side by Side is making a meaningful impact in both private and public spheres, thanks to the unwavering support of committed individuals in Namibia and abroad. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have entrusted us with their resources. I encourage you to peruse this report at your leisure, reflecting on the positive change you have contributed to in our communities across Namibia. All of this is possible because of you. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,
Huipie van Wyk



INTRODUCTION TO SIDE BY SIDE'S PROGRAMS

At Side by Side Early Intervention Centre we run the following 7 programs which is continuously being developed and adjusted to fit the needs of children with disabilities and their families in our Namibian communities.

Listed below are the different programs along with the services we provide under each program.

<p>1. Community Based Rehabilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home visits - Hospital visits - Referrals - Community information sessions - Supportive equipment 	<p>2. Early Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sessions - Town visits - Day Care Rehabilitation - Assessments and IEDP (Individual Educational Development Plan) - Intern and student management - Service Provider Partnership - Clinic - Multi Disciplinary Management
<p>3. Learning Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-School - Foundations - Schooling - After care - Learning support group - Education curriculum development 	<p>4. Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Woman's Health - Palliative Care - Basic Introduction to Disability - Ethical Use of Grants - Inclusive Education - Corporate Training - Staff Training
<p>5. Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public speaking - Development of Material - Social media - Other Media - Awareness 	<p>6. Community Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeding program - Parent reward program - Social reward program - Volunteer
<p>7. Pre-Vocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-vocation assessments - Referrals - Workshops 	

MEET THE TEAM



Admin Team:

Huipie – Managing Director
Helga – Chief Occupational Therapist
Tuna – Intern Social worker
Michelle – Social Worker
Teagan – Therapeutic Reflexologist
Martha – Admin Manager and
Community Development officer
Nadia – Occupational Therapist
Levien – Learning Centre Program
Manager
Olivia Webster – Woman’s Health
Physio



Learning Centre Team:

Helvi – Teacher
Maggy – Teacher
Josephine – Teacher
Lotta – Volunteer
Salom – Volunteer
Lelanie – Class and Kitchen assistant
Florance – Class Assistant
Meret – Volunteer
Rochelle – Class assistant and
Disability advocate
Ndangi – Class assistant and personal
carer



Volunteers:

Ester – Class volunteer
Pamela – Class Volunteer
Clair – Personal Carer Volunteer

ACTIVITIES FOR 2023

Repairs and Maintenance

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Fortitude Property Group and an anonymous sponsor, along with Allen Grey, for their generous contributions toward enhancing accessibility, conducting necessary repairs, and supporting maintenance donations in 2023. Thanks to these invaluable contributions and hard work and planning of Fortitude Property Group, we successfully implemented the development of wheelchair ramps, wheelchair-accessible pathways, and the closure of several walls at our centre. This transformative change not only benefits the children we serve but also greatly enhances the working environment for our staff members with disabilities. We are immensely thankful for the positive impact these initiatives have had on our facilities.



Staff Trainings

Multiple staff training sessions were conducted throughout the year to enhance the skill sets of all Side by Side staff and volunteers, ensuring the delivery of excellent services and effective implementation of programs for children with disabilities and their families. The training covered various essential topics such as Individual Educational Development Plans (IEDP), ethical work practices, fostering good citizenship, improving classroom discipline, enhancing accountability, as well as specific areas like wound care, positioning, bowel control, and more.



Wheelchair Donation

We have received generous donations of wheelchairs, and we are pleased to announce that a wheelchair clinic, coupled with a modification workshop, is scheduled for the end of February 2024. These donated wheelchairs will be assigned to children on the waiting list of the ministry, individuals who were measured and evaluated last year. The provision of wheelchairs is crucial for ensuring the correct positioning and development of children with physical disabilities, significantly contributing to their overall quality of life. We express our gratitude to the public for their continuous support, as many individuals reach out to donate used wheelchairs, further benefiting children in the community who lack access to these essential mobility aids.



Stakeholders Meeting

Numerous stakeholder meetings were convened over the course of the year to deliberate on the future of individuals with disabilities in Namibia, inclusive education, and strategic planning for inclusivity. Side by Side Early Intervention actively participated in these discussions throughout the year, providing insights into the genuine challenges experienced at the grassroots level and advocating for real-time solutions. The meetings brought together various organizations, including UNICEF, ministries, Lithon Foundation, other non-profits, and key stakeholders such as B2Gold, Entrepo, Bank Windhoek, Capricorn Foundation, different Ministries and FIC.



Regional Training

Throughout 2023, comprehensive regional training sessions were held across Namibia with the primary goal of identifying children with disabilities and understanding their specific needs within local communities. These initiatives sought to establish collaboration with service providers in various regions to effectively address the needs of children with disabilities. Additionally, the training programs aimed to educate and empower parents, healthcare workers, and other caregivers responsible for the well-being of children with disabilities. The different ministries in Namibia play a key role in these trainings and we are proud to be working with them towards a better future for children with disabilities in Namibia.

These impactful training sessions took place in key locations, including Windhoek, Oshakati, Luderitz, Oranjemund, Rosh Pinah, Gobabis, Okahandja, and more. The diverse topics covered during these sessions encompassed women's health, proper positioning, wound care, healthy nutrition, the use of supportive equipment, medication prescribe to children with disability, health care professionals responsible for their care, the promotion of good citizenship, self-care practices, the ethical use of disability grants, inclusive education and available resources and a range of other relevant subjects.



Oranjemund ECD teacher training



Parent showing off her creation



Oshakati CP Workshop



Rosh Pinah Woman's health Workshop

Supporting other non profits in our communities

Side by Side remains committed to supporting fellow non-profit organizations through ongoing donations. In November, during our training session in Rosh Pinah, we were able to contribute to the well-being of 60 mothers by providing them with essential items such as sanitary pads and toiletries while conducting training sessions. Additionally, we actively contribute to various children care centers by donating baby milk, playing a vital role in the prevention of malnutrition and associated secondary disabilities.

Our collaborative efforts extend to organizations such as Baby's Cry Foundation, Hands of Hope, Orlandies Children Home, Hope for Life, and numerous others. Through these partnerships, we strive to make a meaningful impact on the lives of mothers, children, and families in need.



Vehicle loaded with donations for trainings

Feeding Program

Our feeding initiative, an integral part of the Community Development Program's objectives, is dedicated to assisting families facing financial difficulties due to the extent of their child/children's disabilities. This program encompasses the distribution of both milk and food parcels to provide vital support. We extend our efforts to address the needs of severely malnourished children, implementing a carefully crafted menu that includes specific foods meticulously cooked, prepared, and blended by Side by Side. These nutritious meals are distributed weekly, contributing to the overall well-being of children with extreme feeding needs.

Throughout 2024, a total of 420 containers of frozen food were distributed by our dedicated dietitian team, who conduct weekly evaluations of the children under our care. The feeding program also includes 45 children enrolled at Side by Side during the day, receiving a healthy breakfast every morning. We express our gratitude to the Lions Club for their continuous contributions to this program, as well as Future Media, which raised funds for these meals during their Hit for Hope challenge in 2023. Special thanks also go to the anonymous donors who generously contribute monthly and quarterly to the purchase of fresh produce utilized in our frozen food program. Additionally, we have received generous donations of fresh meat from a local farmer, further enhancing the variety and nutritional value of our feeding program. The success of these projects is made possible by your unwavering support.



Home Visit



Home made pure for our feeding program

Healthy Breakfast

For numerous years, the Lions Club has been steadfast in its commitment to our healthy breakfast program at Side by Side. Their unwavering support goes beyond occasional contributions, as they faithfully provide monthly assistance to ensure that all 45 children in our Learning Centre receive a nutritious breakfast every day. Recognizing that healthy nutrition is paramount to optimal development, the Lions Club's dedication is instrumental in fostering the well-being of the children at our center with severe disabilities. We express our heartfelt gratitude to the Lions Club and other local sponsors for their crucial role in meeting both the nutritional and physical needs of our children.



Learning centre enjoying their healthy breakfast

Other Support

Throughout the year, we are occasionally touched by the kindness of individuals who, in their private time, express a desire to contribute or undertake small projects to support Side by Side in areas of need. This year, one of these initiatives had a significant impact on our service provision. We received a heavy-duty blender, along with brand new cutlery and cookware for use in our Side by Side kitchen, benefiting the children in our center on a daily basis. We express our immense gratitude for this thoughtful and impactful contribution. But this was only one of the many kind gestures we received throughout the year and would like to thank every individual who contributed to our centre selflessly.



Blender sponsored for the feeding program

Parent Shop

This program holds a special place in our hearts, and we take immense pride in it. Recognizing the delicate balance in the non-profit industry, where our assistance can sometimes inadvertently strip parents of their dignity, we sought a more empowering approach. Understanding that constant handouts may lead to feelings of guilt and reluctance among parents, we initiated a Parent Volunteering Points Program.

Under this program, parents volunteer at Side by Side, taking on tasks that our regular staff may not have the time for. For every hour they contribute, they earn points. Weekly, we open our Point Shop, stocked with a variety of items donated to us regularly. These donations include food, diapers, milk, toiletries, clothing, toys, shoes, and more. Parents can then use the points they've earned through volunteering to purchase items they need from the shop.

This approach creates a mutually beneficial situation. Parents gain valuable skills through their volunteer work, guided by our team leader, while our center benefits from well-managed and cared-for facilities, providing a healthy environment for their children. We have observed the positive impact this program has on the parents' sense of worth. It instills in them the feeling of actively contributing to their children's care and allows them to meet their own needs without the discomfort of having to ask for assistance. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the continuous support through the generous in-kind donations we receive throughout the year.



Parents enjoying benefits at Side by Side



Gerlin and her mom in their culture dress

Learning Centre

The learning center is organized into four distinct classes, each designed to address the unique needs of the children enrolled:

1. Day Care Rehabilitation (Therapy Group):

- This class accommodates 11 children with severe intellectual and/or physical disabilities.
- The focus here is primarily on providing therapy-based care, emphasizing physical needs and independence rather than academic and intellectual areas.
- Due to their young age and the belief in avoiding performance expectations, these children are allowed to grow and develop at their own pace.



Learning at Side by Side

- The class is staffed with 1 teacher, 1 class assistant, and 1 volunteer, all equipped with first aid training. The teacher holds a teaching qualification.

Activities in the Cambri Learn Class

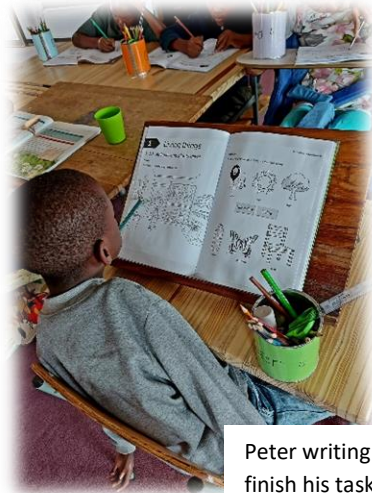


2. Pre-School:

- Catering to 15 children, this class is dedicated to preparing them for formal school, whether in a

mainstream or resource school, depending on accessibility and individual needs.

- Headed by a qualified teacher, supported by a class assistant with formal training, and personal carers attend to children with severe disabilities.



Peter writing with his mouth to finish his tasks in the Cambri Learn Class



3. Foundation to Grade 3 Classes:

- This combined class accommodates 15 children spanning from the foundation level to Grade 3.

- The students progress at their own pace using the Cabri Learn program, complemented by elements of the Montessori method and other curriculums.

- The class is supported by 1 head teacher, 3 class assistants, and 1 volunteer.

Home visits and collaboration

Side by Side, in partnership with Omni Care (Mr Sister), has united to bring quality healthcare directly to the homes of children facing severe disabilities, particularly those whose parents encounter challenges in transporting them due to health, disability, or size constraints. Our collaborative effort involves weekly home visits to assist 13 children with various needs, including therapy, food parcels, medication, health check-ups, and assessments.

Omni Care is a Section 21 (Non-Profit) Organization, relying on the support of the local community to sustain their commendable service in the community. Together, we are dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of these children and their families by providing essential healthcare services directly to their homes. These programs which delivers important services at the doorsteps of children with disabilities are a huge success because



Mr Sister attending to Willem who has Sickle cell, in their mobile clinic

of the support of sponsors like Office and Mailing Automations and numerous monthly sponsors. Their monthly contributions allows us to continue delivering much needed care at home.

A special thank you is also extended to Hands of Hope who have been involved in Ileekela's life continuously and supports us with providing the necessary to Ileekela and his aunt in Walvis Bay. These types of collaboration makes it possible to sustain positive impact.



Home Visit assessments

#UNAM students

Side by Side has formalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNAM to facilitate student placements within the community. These students, accompanied by their dedicated lecturers, specialize in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and social work. In a collaborative effort, Side by Side has provided practical exposure to the community for over 40 students, allowing them to directly engage with the specific needs of children with disabilities in our locality. The MOU with UNAM has markedly amplified the impact of our services.

Overseeing the seamless integration of UNAM students at Side by Side is Helga Burger, a qualified occupational therapist and UNAM lecturer. Helga plays a crucial role in ensuring the smooth operation of the program. The students, considered the future of therapy in Namibia, gain firsthand experience dealing with real-time challenges faced by children in the communities and their families. This exposure equips them to adapt their therapeutic approaches upon graduation.



UNAM physio students doing their block rotation at Side by Side

Through this collaboration, we aspire to inspire these budding therapists to remain in Namibia, continuing to invest in the well-being and development of our children..

Advocacy

Side by Side had the privilege of being a featured speaker at various public events, most notably at the B2Gold handover, which was highlighted in The Namibian on October 19, 2023. Over the course of the year, our organization received coverage in newspapers, actively championing the cause of children

with disabilities and advocating for the essential support services their families require. The act of advocacy is fundamental to achieving our goals of implementing policies and strategies for inclusion.

Furthermore, Side by Side was honored to serve as a speaker at the OTARG event (Occupational Therapy Association Regional Gathering).

During this engagement, we addressed a gathering of over 70 Occupational Therapists, providing insights into the multidisciplinary approach in the future of Namibian care. Additionally, our awareness campaigns extended to a Nurses Symposium in South Africa, a Nurses Symposium in Swakop, and the OTARG (Occupational Therapy Regional Congress).



Nurses forum in Swakopmund where Side by Side was a presenting body.

Fund raising event

Our annual fundraising event achieved tremendous success, and we are filled with gratitude for all the participants. A primary objective was to raise awareness among corporate companies while infusing joy and hope into the proceedings. The highlight of our Potjie Kos Day involved assigning each team a disability topic, requiring them to research and decorate their space to represent that specific disability. A panel of judges evaluated the food, participation in events, and the creativity and understanding demonstrated in depicting the disabilities. We were deeply moved by the enthusiasm of all the participating companies, who went above and beyond to make this a memorable and beautiful day.

We extend our appreciation to the following participants and sponsors: ICE Queen, NEC Power and Pumps, Elwere Windhoek, B2Gold, PKF Financial Consulting Services, Kathy van Niekerk and team, Wonders Sport Club, Future Media, De Sniijplank, Gateway Marketing, Cymot, Gondwana Collection, Blikbeker Catering, Plastic Packaging, Rhodes Quality Namibia, The Strong One Bull Brand, DB's Biltong (Metro), and Studio Works.

The event successfully raised approximately N\$ 45,320.00, providing crucial support for Side by Side to cover monthly expenses. These expenses include taxi fees for children attending therapy, emergency doctor consultations, fuel for our vehicles to reach homes and communities, and addressing any other monthly needs that may arise. Your generosity ensures that Side by Side can continue its vital services.

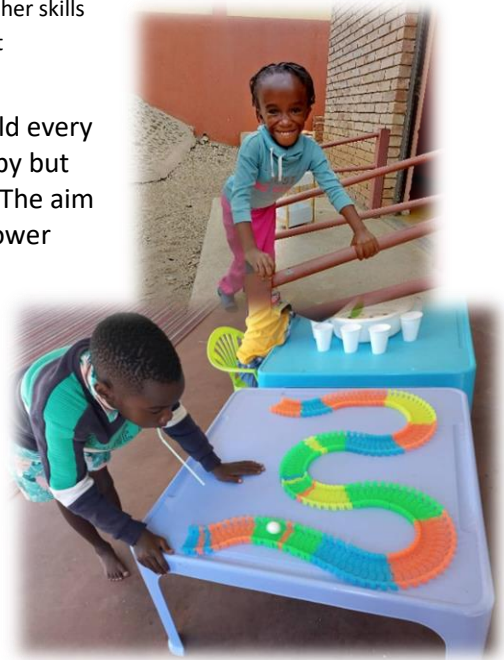


One on One Sessions

Luciana showing off her skills to walk with support

Our individualized one-on-one sessions are carefully crafted to dedicate hourly, focused attention to each child every week. During these sessions, we not only engage in specific therapy but also provide personalized work plans and home-based programs. The aim is to expose parents to tailored therapeutic approaches and empower them with the tools to support their children effectively.

These sessions are a platform for education, encouragement, and inspiration for mothers, fathers, family members, and community members. We strive to promote understanding, acceptance, and the embrace of the unique needs of each child. At present, we offer one-on-one support to over 30 children on a weekly basis. When considering our session children, learning center participants, home visits, and clinic assessments for home care, an average of 120 children receive individualized attention each week at Side by Side.



One on one sessions

Aba Cross

The Aba Cross serves as a carrying mechanism designed to provide support not only for children with physical disabilities but also for their caregivers/parents during the carrying process. Janina, a dedicated volunteer at Side by Side since 2015 who returns annually, conceptualized and designed this mechanism. The Abas are locally manufactured in Namibia and distributed by Side by Side based on the specific needs of both the child and parent. For additional information, please visit Aba Cross on Instagram and Facebook.



Taimi and her mom using Aba Cross for support

Desert Dash

Zelan Burger, Richard Rothauge, Johan Cloete, and Christiaan Horn undertook the challenge of traversing the Namibian Desert, embarking on a journey from Windhoek to Swakop, all in support of raising awareness for the Side by Side Early Intervention Centre during the Desert Dash 2023 event. Your dedicated efforts have played a crucial role in generating awareness, and we express our heartfelt gratitude for your valuable contribution.



Lovely Surpris

What a delightful surprise to receive lunch for all 45 of our children at Side by Side, along with extras for the team working at Side by Side, courtesy of Galito's Namibia. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Future Media and Galito's for dedicating their day to us, bringing immense joy and full tummies to the party.



Parent workshops:

The beading workshop not only enhances the vocational skills of parents but also unites broken hearts, weary souls, and despairing lives, providing a platform for mutual inspiration. In these sessions, mothers have the opportunity to connect with others who share a similar journey of caregiving. Engaging in creativity, learning new skills, and enjoying uplifting conversations, they find solace for the soul. The jewellery created during these workshops is showcased in our office for sale.



Clinics



Dieticians teaching our children the importance of good nutrition

Thursdays mark our Clinic Day, encompassing sessions such as the Occupational Therapy Clinic, Dietician Clinic, and occasionally others. In these clinics, therapists or dieticians engage with the children at our school, parents, or the public, providing insights into therapy or promoting healthy nutrition. Additionally, children are identified for nutrition care, feeding programs, or other referrals, which may involve directing them to various facilities, both in the public and private sectors.

Volunta Volunteering program

We express our gratitude for the ongoing success of the volunteering program at Side by Side. Annually, we welcome volunteers from abroad who not only contribute to our programs but also gain valuable insights and skills from their experiences in another country. These volunteers consistently amaze us with their unwavering commitment, love, kindness, and eagerness to learn and grow. We consider them valuable partners and are thankful for their contributions.



Anna our volunteer for 2022 – 2023 and Helga,
the Chief occupational Therapist

DTS Volleyball for all donation

We express sincere gratitude for the generous donation received from the highly successful event, Volleyball for All, this year. Our heartfelt thanks go out to the public and the participating teams for choosing to support our organization. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

Boys and Girls club

Olivia Webster, a dedicated physiotherapist, takes the lead at our Boys and Girls Club, generously contributing her time once a week to our center. Within this diverse group of program attendees, comprised of four boys and four girls, we have teenagers navigating the complexities of adolescence while confronting unique challenges presented by their disabilities.

Olivia's guidance is immeasurable as these teenagers work towards understanding and accepting their bodies, overcoming obstacles, raising public awareness about their disabilities, and forging meaningful connections. We deeply appreciate Olivia's unwavering commitment and expertise, which play a vital role in helping these remarkable young individuals develop self-awareness, resilience, and the skills needed to navigate life with confidence.

In particular, we extend our gratitude to Olivia for her role in empowering our young girls at Side by Side-Early Intervention Centre, guiding them on the path to becoming beautiful, powerful women in Namibia. Simultaneously, she invests in the character development of our young men, teaching them to be exemplary models of success in Namibia. Olivia's investment of time goes beyond imparting skills; it includes teaching these young individuals how incredibly unique and loved they are. She emphasizes that their disabilities do not define them and that the journey to womanhood or manhood is an adventure filled with both obstacles and butterflies.



Our boys and girls club graduates.

Here's to the "Woman Club" and "Men's Club" at Side by Side—a testament to the profound impact that Side by Side makes on fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for these extraordinary young individuals.

Awareness campaigns

Creating awareness stands as a cornerstone of our mission. We actively work to address and dismantle the stigma and misunderstandings surrounding disabilities, shedding light on the reasons behind them and championing inclusivity. Capitalizing on every opportunity to connect with the public, we have been visible next to sports fields, in malls, on radios, in newspapers, on TV, and at various special public events throughout the year. Through these engagements, we advocate for a more inclusive and enlightened perspective on disabilities.

One of the highlights of our awareness campaigns is our annual Crazy Sock Campaign, where we specifically advocate for Down Syndrome and inclusion. This initiative encourages the public to understand and accept diversity, with the aim of imparting insights into the beauty of uniqueness.



Representation at the Health Expo

The Senior Park Dingetjies club

It was a heartwarming day when the Senior Park ladies visited our center to spend time with the children. They lovingly wrapped the children in scarves and beanies that they had crafted for the winter. The children were overjoyed to receive these beautiful gifts and eagerly showcased them to one another. The kindness and compassion demonstrated by this group of ladies was truly heartwarming and beautiful. On that day, a total of 45 children received scarves and beanies, creating a memorable and special experience for everyone involved.



Lolo showing off



Luciana impressed
with the pink



Jun-Jun cannot
believe his great
fortune

Windhoek Gymnasium Private School volunteer day

The young individuals from Windhoek Gymnasium Private School stepped up when we sought volunteers to repair our monkey gym. Devoting an entire Saturday to the task, they diligently repaired and painted the monkey gym, restoring it to a safe and beautiful condition. Their commitment and effort not only revitalized the play area but also showcased their positive influence as contributors to the betterment of our community. We extend our heartfelt thanks for their valuable assistance, recognizing them as positive role models for the next generation.



Hit for hope fundraising

As we reflect on the culmination of a successful year, we find ourselves overwhelmed with gratitude for the tremendous public fundraising efforts that have profoundly impacted Side by Side-Early Intervention Centre and the community we serve. Words often fall short when expressing our appreciation, but we extend our heartfelt thanks to Future Media, Safland, and all the participants of the Hit 4 Hope 2023 event.

Once again, we have been fortunate to be the beneficiaries of this incredible initiative, and we are sincerely thankful for the trust participants have placed in us by entrusting the funds raised to impact our community and children with disabilities. The financial support received during this event plays a pivotal role in supporting a range of activities outlined in our reach. These include aiding families with daily nutritional needs, facilitating transportation to medical and therapeutic appointments, providing fuel for home visits and outreach campaigns, and covering consulting fees for children to see specialists and obtain supportive equipment – the impact is extensive.

Beyond the financial support, these initiatives contribute significantly to creating awareness in society about disability, illuminating the dreams and ambitions harbored by children with disabilities. These children aspire to engage in sports, partake in enjoyable activities, and be recognized for their achievements.

We are thrilled to announce that Side by Side-Early Intervention Centre has received generous sponsorships from Future Media, Safland, and all the participants of the Hit 4 Hope 2023 event. This support is invaluable, allowing us to continue our work and make a positive impact in our community, which is home to children with disabilities and their families. The contributions received has enabled us to provide essential services and support to those in need.

To Future Media, Safland, and all the participants of the Hit 4 Hope event, we extend our heartfelt thanks. Your support meant everything to us, and we couldn't do what we do without you. As we close this chapter, we hope that you will continue to follow our journey and stay connected with us. Together, we can make a lasting difference and create a better future for children with disabilities in Namibia. Thank you once again for your generosity and unwavering support throughout this impactful year.



Training the SOS children Village staff

In addition to our efforts, we advocate for inclusive children's homes. We dedicated three days to training the staff at the SOS Children's Home on inclusivity, accessibility, and providing support for children with disabilities. The training covered topics such as what to expect, how to seek help, and effective care for children with disabilities, healthy positioning, supportive equipment and much more. We are profoundly grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this cause, recognizing the limited resources available to children's homes for the care of children with disabilities.



While acknowledging the challenges, we emphasize that creating exclusive children's homes solely for children with disabilities is not the ultimate solution. All children, with and without disabilities, benefit from an inclusive environment. It is crucial that children with disabilities share their homes with those without disabilities to learn how to navigate society and develop naturally. Our training initiatives have also extended to staff at other children's homes, including Eros Children's Home and Orlindies.

Sun City Nurses Forum representation

It was a tremendous honor to be invited as a speaker to Sun City, South Africa, where Huipie van Wyk, the managing director of Side by Side, had the opportunity to share our identity, mission, and the personal journey she and her family experienced with a daughter with a disability. The presentation included reflections on preparing for her daughter's passing and the subsequent journey. Our testimonials, along with those of children with disabilities, embody tangible stories of hope, acceptance, and uniqueness.



Representing Namibia on a platform predominantly attended by more than 400 health care professionals was a significant honor, providing us with exposure and access to various impactful areas throughout Africa.

Multi Disciplinary support

One of the most impactful services we provide involves a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to address the diverse needs of children with disabilities and the profound impact we can have on their lives. Janine van Schalkwyk, a Clinical Psychologist, has played a crucial role in conducting assessments to diagnose children in need. Additionally, Lana Senekal, a dedicated Speech Therapist, has generously

contributed her time to provide essential treatments for children identified during their enrollment at Side by Side. Also part of this team is Helga Burger an Occupational Therapist, Olivia Webster volunteering her time as a physio therapist, and a team of therapists including a reflexologist, social worker and community development officer at Side by Side.

This holistic approach aims to cater to the unique needs of each child through a multi-sectoral strategy. Looking ahead, our goal for 2024 is to further strengthen and expand this collaborative team and its objectives. Together, we aspire to make an even greater positive impact on the lives of the children we serve.

Parent counselling

At Side by Side, parent counseling plays a pivotal role in fostering understanding, facilitating recovery, and promoting the mental health of parents with children with disabilities. Our center provides individual counseling, group counseling, and mentorship programs, all designed to offer comprehensive support to parents navigating this challenging journey. Through these initiatives, we aim to address the unique needs of parents and contribute to their well-being as they navigate the complexities of raising children with disabilities.

UNAM short cores

We are thrilled to announce that our short course on disability has received approval from UNAM and is now a NQF accredited course. The course is scheduled to launch in March 2024, and we are excited to offer training to 60 parents and community healthcare workers free of charge for a duration of six months. This accreditation marks a significant milestone in our commitment to providing valuable education and support in the field of disability.

All these activities share a common goal, encompassing various facets of support for children with disabilities and their families. The overarching objective is to promote Early Identification by advocating for Early Childhood Development. Additionally, the initiatives aim to mobilize Early Intervention Services by introducing diverse medical therapists, ensuring timely and comprehensive care and introducing a multi disciplinary approach. Another crucial aspect is the implementation of Community-Based Rehabilitation through well-structured training modules, fostering a significant improvement in the quality of life for all children with disabilities. Beyond these, the activities strive to bring about a positive shift in the attitude, behavior, and beliefs of the community towards individuals with disabilities. Lastly, the efforts extend to providing both emotional and physical support to address the diverse needs of the children and their families, fostering a more inclusive and supportive community environment.

HUMAN STORIES AND HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023

The story of Taimi

Over the span of several years, our capacity to provide crucial assistance to Taimi—ensuring she had a caregiver and access to education—became a reality due to the generous financial backing from Owanaheda. Taimi, born on July 4, 2008, faced the challenges of Spastic Cerebral Palsy, a condition that shaped her unique journey.

From 2017 to 2022, Taimi actively participated in her education at Dagbreek School. However, early in 2023, a hurdle emerged as Taimi struggled to find the motivation to return to school. Having missed two weeks and facing difficulty reaching an agreement with her mother to encourage her attendance, Side by Side intervened by scheduling a counseling session with the head of Dagbreek School.



Recognizing the need for a change, a decision was made to relocate Taimi to Side by Side, a school much closer to her home, offering not only formal education but also weekly therapy. In February 2023, Taimi commenced her formal schooling at Side by Side, marking a new chapter in her educational journey. Simultaneously, efforts were initiated to devise a plan for her weight gain, a crucial step towards qualifying for a necessary back operation. The fast progression of her scoliosis causes severe pain and discomfort. Side by Side arranged for Taimi to undergo scan and tests to see how we can, effectively limit her pain. She was seen by Dr Faatjie du Toit, a specialist from South Africa, who committed to the operation once she has gained enough weight.

Since Taimi's enrollment at Side by Side, she has been receiving weekly therapy at the center, while she is in the learning centre, addressing the complexities of her condition. Holidays posed a challenge in preventing the worsening of her Scoliosis, yet with the collaborative efforts of Janina, a physiotherapist from Germany, and local therapists, Taimi's pain has been managed relatively, considering the severity of her disability.

Despite the physical challenges, Taimi has thrived in the academic sphere, showcasing resilience and determination in her studies and learning experiences. The anticipation of a brand new wheelchair in January 2024, specifically designed to provide crucial back support and assist in pain management, adds a hopeful dimension to Taimi's journey, made possible through the unwavering support of Owanaheda and the German Embassy. Janina, the dedicated physiotherapist, aptly describes Taimi as a fighter, acknowledging the daily struggles she faces with severe progressing scoliosis and recurring pain caused by spasticity.

As Side by Side continues to support Taimi, encouragement for her and her mother to adhere to regular stretches and proper positioning remains a key focus. Taimi's progress at Side by Side holds profound importance, symbolizing the collective commitment to her well-being and triumph over adversities. In expressing gratitude, we extend heartfelt thanks to Owanaheda for their continued support towards Taimi's health, well-being, and the promise of a brighter future.



Taimi during an abdominal sonar to assess the placement of her organs.



Taimi and her mom during a Psychologists assessment.

Photos are fun

Laurika Breed dedicated her time to capture the sheer joy present at our center during a wonderfully arranged photo shoot day. Her remarkable ability to focus on the beauty rather than emphasizing the challenges and struggles related to caring for a child with disabilities is truly commendable. We express profound gratitude and humility as we are privileged to share a selection of these captured moments with you. Through Laurika's lens, the essence of the positive and uplifting atmosphere at our center shines, showcasing the resilience, love, and joy that define the experiences we share with the children under our care.



The only condition that people in this world cannot accommodate is a bad attitude.....

Birthday Parties

Each individual is deserving of celebration, as we are all uniquely designed to contribute to making this world a better place. At our center, we embrace the significance of each child's birth, and, in acknowledgment of this, we plan a joyous birthday party once a month. This celebration is marked by an abundance of cake, chips, lively music, and dancing, creating an atmosphere of festivity and warmth.

The fulfillment and joy we experience as a team in our roles go beyond any worldly pleasure. It is an enduring and profound joy that holds genuine human life value. As a cherished tradition, at the close of each month, specifically on the last Friday, we come together to collectively celebrate the birthdays of the children born during that month. This monthly gathering has become an eagerly anticipated event for everyone involved, serving as a highlight that brings joy, camaraderie, and a sense of unity to our community. This year was also a special year as Side by Side Celebrated its 10th birthday as well. Here is to many more successful years filled with great milestones and completed dreams.



MEDIA COVERAGE STATISTICS

<u>TV coverage</u>	
NBC	800 000
One Africa	180 000
<u>Radio Coverage</u>	
NBC	1.8 million
99 FM	130 000
Future Media	600 000
<u>Newspapers</u>	
Namibian	243 000 Daily Readership
New Era	107 000 Daily Readership
Republikein	63 000 Daily Readership

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

1. Grant applications lack clear guidelines, leading to rejection and reluctance from healthcare professionals to complete necessary documents.
2. Blame-shifting in various departments discourages parents from seeking needed care, and administrative issues at state facilities hinder access.
3. Significant shortage of Early Intervention Services.
4. High rates of teenage pregnancies.
5. Media lacks supportive guidelines, leading to potential exploitation as parents use the platform to seek assistance.
7. Children's homes lack inclusion and resources for children with disabilities.
8. Limited resources in regions and townships.
9. Hospitals, as the first line of defence, often struggle with effective intervention.
10. Parents seeking help in the public sector feel burdensome or disrespected.
11. Unaffordable private sectors for parents without health insurance.
12. Health care professionals lack understanding.
13. Limited availability of supportive equipment.
14. Long waiting lists at schools for children with disabilities.
15. Stigma and bullying in schools and society.
16. Limited understanding in school inclusion programs.
17. Negative beliefs about the causes of disability.
18. Lack of accessibility.
19. Poverty perpetuates disability, and disability perpetuates poverty.
20. Language and communication barriers.
21. Mismanagement of grants by family members, especially for individuals with intellectual impairments.
22. Insufficient staff and professionals in the regions.

- 24. Space constraints at Side by Side.
- 26. Transportation challenges for families from different regions to Windhoek.
- 28. Emphasis needed on morals and ethics in decision-making for parents and families.
- 29. Limited cooperation hampers services and support in the regions.
- 30. Shortage of therapeutic staff, including physios, dieticians, speech therapists, and occupational therapists.

IMPACT

Activity	#Children	#Parents	#Professionals	Sessions/ Parcels	Total
Assistive Devices and Medication	35	2			37
Okahandja and Rehoboth Training	19	11	1	24	30
Child Hospitalization	182	277	117	26	576
Home and hospital visits	3				3
Support Groups and vocation training	41	63		156	104
Referrals	15	26	2	7	41
Grant Applications	44				44
Other Assistance	14				14
Public Speaking		3	(Start a business)		3
UNAM students			693	3	465
Feeding Program			46		46
Healthy Breakfast at SbS	29	47		664	76
Milk distributed to other non profit child care units	45		4 (Volunteers)	5 days per week	45
Nappies and Toiletries			3	940	2
One-on-One Sessions	19	22		191	41
Learning Centre	35	62		656	105
Pre School	15	22		5 days per week	35
Day care Rehabilitation	15	22		5 days per week	37
Support other non profitis	11	19		5 days per week	29
New Interviews			5		9
International Volunteers	133	169			302
Awareness Campaigns (Newspapers and radio)			12		12
Parent meetings				9	
Community Development and counselling	38	65		6	103
Staff Training	22			87	
			32	9	32

Occupational and Dietician clinics	48	67		11	115
Collaborative meetings			53	4	53
Totals	711	877	986		2 574

GOALS FOR 2024

- Side by Side is excited to welcome more UNAM students for practical hours and support.
- The screening clinic will continue.
- Regional Trainings will continue.
- Conduct the UNAM short cores on Disability in Namibia. (NQF accredited)
- Our CambriLearn program continues
- More parent Training both in Windhoek and outside Windhoek.
- Corporate training.
- School visits and awareness campaigns.
- Disability Prevention Program which includes Prenatal Care and woman's health.
- Vocational Training.
- Group sessions.
- One on One session.
- Stakeholders breakfast
- Motivational speeches
- Expantion of premises
- Further grow and expand our Multi-disciplinary approach
- Empower communities

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Expressing gratitude to our numerous sponsors has become increasingly challenging due to the overwhelming support received from both Namibian and international entities. Your collective generosity, whether through financial contributions or services in kind, is indispensable to Side by Side's mission, and we sincerely appreciate your commitment to our organization's flourishing.

As sponsors, your invaluable contributions play a crucial role in the realization of our goals. We want to assure you that every donation is utilized judiciously, making a significant impact where it is needed most. This report aims to provide you with insights into how your support connects with our mission, fostering a sense of shared purpose and accomplishment.

The outpouring of support received by Side by Side throughout the year has been truly overwhelming, instilling in us a renewed sense of courage rooted in hope. Your involvement and contributions have been instrumental in sustaining our hope and fortitude. Even if your name is not individually mentioned in this report, please know that our gratitude extends far beyond these pages.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to you, recognizing that the impact of your donation reverberates throughout the lives of children with disabilities and their families. Your trust in our stewardship of both monetary and in-kind donations is deeply appreciated, and we executed our intentions with the utmost care and best intentions at heart. "Thank you" feels inadequate in expressing our gratitude for your unwavering support.

But it would not be fair if we did not mention our main sponsors who contributed significantly this year to keep the doors of Side by Side open. Those sponsors are B2Gold, Entrepo Namibia, Hit for hope fund raising initiative, Allen Grey Philanthropy, UNICEF, NHP, Our monthly sponsors who have committed to contribute consistently every month, CFC Church, Office and Machine Automation cc, Dischem Grove Mall, Owanaheda, Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners e.V. / Friends of Waldorf Education, Lions Club, and numerous local sponsors who wish to remain anonymous.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

In February 2024, Side by Side is set to launch our Direct Debit program, and we are thrilled to share that there are already individuals supporting us monthly with contributions of N\$ 100.00 or N\$ 1,000.00. We extend a warm invitation to companies to join Side by Side as members and consider contributing N\$ 1,000.00 per month, while individuals are encouraged to contribute N\$ 100.00 per month. As you peruse this report, envision the impact your N\$ 100.00 can have on improving the lives of children with disabilities.

For those who prefer making annual donations, grants, or donating in-kind items such as stationery, nappies, and wet wipes, your support is warmly welcomed. Below is a list of monthly-use products, and if your company supplies any of these items and wishes to contribute in a non-monetary way, please review the list and inform us of your preferred method of assistance. Your involvement is greatly appreciated, and we express our immense gratitude for your ongoing support.



Banking Details:

Side by Side

Bank Windhoek

Branch: 481 972

Acc: 8003629384

Ref: Your company name

E-mail:

info@sidebysidenamibia.com



Food Products	Toiletries	Stationary	Other
Weetbix	Wetwipes	Printing ink	Clothes
Brown Sliced bread	Tissues	Box of Printing paper	Toys
Yoghurt	Toilet paper	Lever arch files	Other household items that we can sell in our shop.
Eggs	Dish Washing Liquid	Wood glue	Fuel for home visits
Oats pap	Handy Andy	Prit	
Muffin mix	Pine Gel		
Jam	Washing Powder		
Peanut butter	Hand Wash		
Oranges	Nappies # 2 / 3 / 4 / 5		
Apples	Air freshner		
Banannas	Domestos		
Sugar	Vaseline		
Butter	Toothpaste		
Instant noodles	Body Lotion		
Milk	Doom		
Oil	Black Bags		
Nido +3 milk			
Ensure milk			

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:



Selma - Yallo

27 November 2017

to

11 August 2023

CLOSING REMARKS

In conclusion, Side by Side reaffirms its ongoing commitment to supporting children with disabilities across Namibia. We pledge to persistently utilize our resources to make a positive impact in the lives of these children, acknowledging the challenges and limitations we may encounter. While we cannot promise assistance to everyone, the steadfast determination of parents, communities, and institutions is crucial for sustaining the support and development of each child. Despite our expansion beyond initial capacities, Side by Side remains dedicated to authentic narratives over mere statistics. Our loyalty lies in the individual stories, and we will continue to contribute to the success of each unique journey. To everyone who reads this report, your support and encouragement are instrumental. If this report brings a smile to your face, remember that your involvement is the reason behind it. We extend our gratitude and encourage you to maintain your support for Side by Side while holding us accountable to our commitments. Thank you for being an integral part of our shared mission.



Yours sincerely
Huipie van Wyk
Managing Director
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