

PIET RETIEF

Ministry distributes wheelchairs in Swaziland



In the southern part of Swaziland which mostly consists of rural areas where people survive on subsistence farming, the Swaziland Reformed Church launched the SHBC (Shiselweni Reformed Home-Based Care) ministry. This area is also the poorest and most vulnerable of Swaziland, where HIV/AIDS has taken a huge toll.

In 2005 God laid a vision in the heart of this congregation's pastor, Arnau van Wyngaard, to lead them into becoming the hands and feet of Christ within the community.

From a humble beginning where a group of 32 volunteers were trained in 2006, to becoming specialised

home-based caregivers, the ministry has now grown to 830 volunteers in 32 communities all over the Shiselweni region, taking care of more than 2800 clients.

The ministry has also expanded through the establishment of a pre-school for thirty children, most of whom are orphans, as well as establishing two feeding points for orphaned or vulnerable children, where approximately 150 children can receive at least one meal per day. They also started a wheelchair ministry, through which more than 150 wheelchairs have already been distributed over the past year, and another 150 are waiting to be assembled so that they can also be deliv-

ered. When asked what their greatest need is, Arnau answers without hesitation: "Food!" The volunteer caregivers mostly live far below the breadline, yet they often take the little food they have in their homes to share it with the sick.

In an attempt to assist these caregivers, an innovative initiative was started, known as Adopt-A-Caregiver, through which a caregiver can be supported with R250 per month to enable them to have food and basic medication through which they can help their community.

For more information, visit www.shbcare.org, contact Arnau at wyngaard@lando.co.za or phone 082 924 5632.