

Mama Carol's Story

Building a Community—seeing all individuals as resources.

According to current estimates, over 660,000 South African children have been orphaned due to AIDS and that number is on the rise. These children all live in child-headed households, and many are left to fend for themselves and younger siblings.

Carol Dyanti, known affectionately as Mama Carol,

started a South African AIDS Ministry called Ikageng Itireleng in 2000, when she came into contact with AIDS orphans in Soweto as a community worker. "I met a group of siblings who had no electricity and could not go to school because they had no money for school fees. The oldest child, a 13-year-old, was caregiver to their mother who had AIDS. The father was dead and their relatives didn't want to know."

After helping the orphans, Carol got phone calls from many more children in the same situation. Mama Carol now cares for 1,731 children in more than 200 homes in Soweto. Ikageng Itireleng provides basic supplies such as food, clothing, school fees, transportation, water and electricity to the children as well as love, care, mentoring and life skills. The organization is unique in that it tries to preserve the family unit by keeping siblings together in their homes.

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Is this an example of a community project?

Are people taking care of each other?

How are people helping each other?

Why are people helping each other?

