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2 June 2020

Molweni zihlobo zika Starting Chance (Hello Friends of Starting Chance)

Umbuliso usuka eKapa (Greetings from Cape Town)

### COVID-19 – Flattening the curve of poverty and hopelessness – Let us bring hope

*We are grateful for the ongoing support we have had from our very faithful Friends of Starting Chance. You have enabled us to bring hope and support to 165 families this month – thank you.*

#### An update:

South Africa has moved to Lockdown Level 3, bringing relief to many who have been unable to work and produce an income. But for the schools we support the relaxation actually brings more trauma and stress. Many of the parents are returning to work but there is no one to look after their children. The directive from the Department of Social Development is to keep ECD's closed. Not only does this mean the teachers have no work and no pay for another month, but it also means the children are vulnerable as they roam the streets of Mfuleni where there is no one to care for them.

#### In May, Starting Chance focused on:

- Paying out COVID-19 subsidies to all the teachers across the 30 schools thanks to your generous financial help
- Weekly Google Hangouts meetings with our principals which were appreciated and valuable
- Collecting and disseminating information on how government support can be accessed
- Weekly virtual team meetings and we had our first month of online isiXhosa lessons, which were awesome. Our 3 field workers took it in turns to run an hour session each. Apart from a lot of laughter over our attempted pronunciation, we did learn some isiXhosa too
- Partnering with an organisation called Mfuleni CAN to distribute food vouchers to parents in need across our schools
- Providing support to concerned principals and teachers through our online support groups
- Tessa, our volunteer, coached the principals on the use of Google Hangouts and the SC staff team on using Microsoft Word editing tools.

#### In June we aim to focus on the following:

- **Mental health** – continuing to support our staff, the principals and teachers who are taking huge strain.
- **Mental agility** – offering short courses to up-skill our staff in key areas.
- **Digital Connection and Sharing Platform** – making use of technology to connect and learn
- **Financial Wellbeing** – supporting the teachers, principals and parents in whatever way we can. We hope to be able to pay COVID-19 subsidies for another month
- **COVID-19 Ready Schools** – *helping the principals prepare for the reopening of their schools. There are a lot of legal requirements, and they are grappling to understand what they need to do. Reopening also requires additional resources they have no money to buy.*

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## Many of you are asking: “How can we help?”

### Here are some suggestions:

- **“Adopt a teacher” Campaign** – in May we paid R1,000 to each teacher in the schools with whom we work, and we anticipate having to do this again in June – *you can help by “adopting a teacher” which entails sponsoring the subsidy.* (Of course, we realise R1,000 is a lot of money, but any amount you can give would be appreciated.)
- **Personal Protective Equipment** – Help us to provide equipment and support for when the schools re-open. We have costed the requirements at approximately R4,500 to R6,500 per school depending on the number of children and staff.
- **Spread the word** – please share the campaign with friends, colleagues and organisations and encourage them to “adopt a teacher” or support us to purchase the necessary PPE.

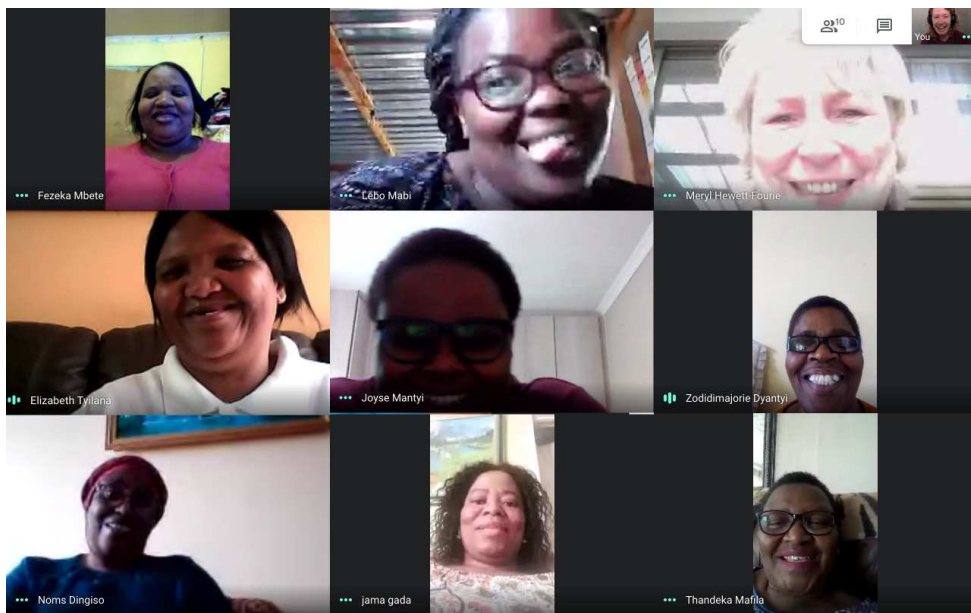
*Together we can get through COVID-19.*

*(Please don't feel pressure to donate if you have already – but help us to connect with others)*

Thank you for your help, words of encouragement and support. Without you, we can do nothing – with you, we can give these incredible people a starting chance in overcoming the COVID-19 crisis.

Kind regards

Starting Chance Trustees



*Our Google Hangouts meeting*