

Report on Covid-19 Funds Raised and Actions Taken to Respond to the Impact of the Pandemic

Below is a summary of the value of donations received for the Starting Chance Covid-19 Response Fund and a breakdown of expenditure to distribute subsidies and PPE in the form of Covid-Kits.

	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	TOTAL
Donations	5 000.00	305 713.17	122 030.49	240 389.50	51 387.51	724 520.67
					44 000.00	44 000.00
Pledges	5 000.00	305 713.17	122 030.49	240 389.50	95 387.51	768 520.67
PPE	-	-	-	45 200.44	236.96	45 437.40
	-	254 250.00	171 000.00	156 000.00	156 000.00	737 250.00
	-	254 250.00	171 000.00	201 200.44	156 236.96	782 687.40
Subsidies	5 000.00	51 463.17	(48 969.51)	39 189.06	(60 849.45)	(14 166.73)

At the outset of the Covid-19 lockdown we began to provide support to Mfuleni schools in the Starting Chance programme. In March we supported the 9 schools in the full programme, but as reality of the lockdown's impact and the school closures became apparent we expanded our support to the 30 schools registered with us.

Fortunately, the Rachel Swart Fund contacted us in April and offered to support Lonwabo Special Care Centre. They have generously continued to cover the shortfall in salaries and have just paid the July subsidy. I am happy to say this has forged a new partnership, and RSF will be supporting Lonwabo as we move forward.

Starting Chance initially paid a subsidy of R1500 per person at the end of March. When it became clear that the lockdown would continue for months, rather than weeks, the board reassessed our position and we decided to settle on paying a subsidy of R1000/person. Amazingly, across the 29 schools with the help of Stichting Mzamomhle it has been possible to pay 156 subsidies per month for a period of four months – the last has just been distributed on 24th July. I doubt we could have achieved this without the expertise of our Treasurer, Carl Nielsen, who managed this process.

The reopening of schools is proving to be a difficult process – and it is not yet clear how many centres will reopen. The Department of Social Development (DSD) imposed a stringent set of requirements, including the online submission of forms – few ECDs in poor communities are equipped to do this. Working with Learn to Live we acquired all of the material required by DSD, and after attending a briefing by L2L our fieldworkers provided small group support sessions for principals of the 30 schools to complete and submit their Standard Operating Procedure and Self-Assessment forms to DSD. These were prerequisites for reopening. The Starting Chance team also took delivery of PPE materials, some of which was sourced from Mfuleni-based suppliers and put together 30 Covid-19-Kits providing the schools with the essential materials they required to deep clean the schools prior to reopening, together with PPE required for staff to operate the schools.

21 schools were ready to open in July but many opted to defer opening to August and some are even waiting for September. The principals are concerned that many parents have no money, so fees are unlikely to be paid in July. DSD has also created a great deal of uncertainty due to communication received from "Vuyokazi" who appears to have declared that only registered facilities will be



permitted to open – this is in conflict with official statements. Due to the threat of sanctions being taken on those who do not comply, many principals are fearful of overstepping the mark. DSD have made it clear that we have to take the lead from Learn 2 Live. At this stage there is still a lack of clarity as DSD communication is confusing. I will have to update you as to what happens as we move in to August.

This year in July, the Mandela Day “67 minutes” was transformed to “Feed a child for R67/month” to run a social media fundraising campaign aiming to raise funds for food to feed the children returning to schools as they reopened. There were 2119 children attending the schools prior to the lockdown. In total R38 800 was raised. This is yet to be distributed as we are waiting to assess how many children return in August.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Corbett', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Ian Corbett

29/07/2020

Chairman