



Media Release

Johannesburg

SOLIDARITY FUND

Donations by South Africans have closed the supply gap for Personal Protective Equipment against COVID-19

- Funding for 400 000 testing kits approved
- 137 837 food parcels delivered across nine provinces

8 MAY 2020: The Solidarity Fund, working with Business for South Africa (B4SA), has helped secure 100% of the N95 masks and nearly 80% of the surgical masks required in terms of weekly demand ahead of the expected surge in COVID19 cases.

The successful procurement of this essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is crucial for the safety of healthcare workers and efforts to contain COVID-19, as the country eases the lockdown and hospitals prepare for the peak of coronavirus infections in the months ahead. The Fund and B4SA were able to secure the PPE, thanks to the more than R2bn in donations received from businesses, foundations, and ordinary citizens and took place in an extraordinarily tough environment, with almost every country in the world seeking to procure limited stocks from a few suppliers.

"The national lockdown was always intended to flatten the curve and to buy time for South Africa to better prepare our health services for increased numbers of Covid-19 cases. Our teams of volunteers have been hard at work using this time to secure personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers treating those with the virus as well as containing its spread," said CEO of the Solidarity Fund, Nomkhita Nqweni.

The Fund works with The National Coronavirus Command Council and B4SA to determine critical needs for the public health system. Once procured, orders are tracked and received, then delivered to National Department of Health depots, public hospitals and municipalities across the country.

In addition, 400,000 Covid-19 testing kits costing R250 million have been approved for the National Health Laboratory Service to support increased testing as lockdown eases on a risk-adjusted basis.

This week, the Solidarity Fund also approved funding of R11,3m to manufacture two prototypes of locally developed CPAP ventilators. This is a project led by the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) and managed by the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO). The project aims to manufacture 10,000 such ventilators in South Africa by July of this year, coinciding with the projected peak in coronavirus infections. This is in addition to 200 ventilators which have been ordered at the cost of R19.5 million to bolster the national system's capacity to treat patients with the disease.

The Solidarity Fund has also funded significant food relief intervention with more than 137 800 food parcels delivered to distressed families across the country as of 5 May 2020, despite safety and security issues slowing deliveries to communities and food supply disruptions causing additional delays. The Fund expects to meet its 250 000-delivery target by the middle of May.

To date, the Fund has recorded R2,6bn in pledges, with R2bn of these already received. Said Nqweni: "We thank each individual, business and charitable foundation for their generous donations over the past few weeks. We have used their contributions to make critical interventions in the areas of healthcare, humanitarian relief as well as mobilising South Africans to drive a united response to the pandemic. Each Rand will continue to be used with one goal in mind - to help South Africans survive the threat of COVID-19."

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The Solidarity Fund was set up by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 23 March 2020 in response to the threat of the Covid19 pandemic on South Africa. It has a clear mandate to support the national health response, contribute to humanitarian relief efforts and mobilise South Africans to drive a united response to the Covid19. The Fund is committed to transparency around all our activities. You can find detailed information and reports on donations received, how we allocate resources as well as the impact we are having by clicking [here](#).

Additional notes

More than R1bn of PPE stock is at various stages of the supply chain, with more orders expected to arrive over the next 2-3 weeks and a significant amount of PPE has been delivered to the Department of Health for distribution to the provinces.

To date, the Fund has delivered 1,8m patient masks; 1,6m surgical gloves; 475 000 masks for Community Health Workers; 60 000 N95 masks, 13 000 units of sanitisers; 450 gowns and 1 300 goggles to the National Department of Health.

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