



I. SOLIDARITY FUND'S HUMANITARIAN MANDATE

The humanitarian effort is one of four immediate focus areas for the disbursement of funds donated by South Africans to the Solidarity Fund. To provide accelerated aid for South Africa's most vulnerable households and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, the humanitarian effort will focus on promoting human welfare through augmenting the efforts of government and business to enhance households' ability to cope through the pandemic through sustaining access to food, care and other interventions to alleviate the impact of economic disruption.

Three features define the nature of the Fund's disbursements

- The Fund is a **rapid response vehicle**, designed to fund impactful initiatives that will augment existing health and humanitarian efforts.
- The Fund is **short-term** in nature, and is responding to the COVID-19 crisis.
- The Fund is **independently administered**, and it is separate and independent from both government and business.

II. FOOD RELIEF PROGRAMME

The Fund's first humanitarian disbursement, announced on 18 April 2020, took the form of a R120 million funding commitment to provide emergency food relief to over 250 000 distressed households across South Africa. The relief effort was targeted at reaching the vulnerable families, experiencing severe food insecurity during the lockdown period.

This short-term, immediate relief intervention was designed to be a stop-gap measure to allow time for the more systemic government grant solutions to come on stream, and the resumption of government feeding programmes at schools and DSD centres. The food parcels provided basic food relief for a household for two to three weeks (depending on household size).

Each parcel included a mix of starch, proteins and vegetables, and the cost incurred by the Fund, per parcel, ranged from R350-430, including cost of delivery. Distribution solutions were needed to reach the most marginalised and remote communities across South Africa, in the shortest possible time, whilst observing the rules of the national lockdown.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDED THE FUND'S FOOD DELIVERY EFFORTS



Speed

The Fund's driving principle was to reach households as soon as possible, so a wide range of high-capacity partners were identified that could deliver quickly and at scale through a targeted application process.



Geographic reach

The Fund's mandate was to reach all nine provinces and ensure both rural and urban coverage across the most deprived municipalities in South Africa. The Fund allocated parcels across the nine provinces in general proportion to the number of people below the poverty line in each province.



Resource efficiency

The vast majority of the Fund's disbursement went directly to beneficiaries, with very limited funding covering intermediary distribution costs. On average, the distribution costs were 6% of the total disbursement, with remote areas incurring higher distribution charges.



Inclusion

The Fund aimed to reach vulnerable households through a wide variety of partners across civil society, private sector and government. The Fund collaborated with four large food non-profit organisations, seven provincial implementing agents, two logistics companies and more than 400 community-based and faith-based organisations (details on the next page).



Traceability

The Fund partnered with organisations that had the ability to monitor, track and validate delivery to beneficiary households.



Safety

The Fund ensured that its partners adhered to social distancing and safety measures while distributing food.



Build systems

Finally, the Fund seeks to use these partnership networks for physical food distribution, and digital voucher and cash transfer mechanisms, to build last-mile distribution platforms for future humanitarian and public health programmes.

The Fund, which is an independent organisation, augmented existing civil society and government food relief efforts. Distribution of the parcels was done through a range of partners to optimise national coverage and impact.

Food parcel distribution approach



Pillar 1

59 811 Parcels were distributed through the Department of Social Development's (DSD)

235 Community Nutrition and Development Centres (CNDGs). The National DSD contributed R20 million and the Solidarity Fund contributed R23.5 million to reaching these households. Agreements were drawn up with provincial implementing agents (PIAs). Each province has an existing PIA, which DSD already contracts with, so there was no need for an application process to determine distribution partners for this Pillar. Despite this, the Fund also conducted capacity assessments of each PIA up front to see what resources, facilities or staff they had available, and provided added support, as needed. The parcel contents were agreed upon with the DSD.

The Fund contracted the following PIAs

Name of provincial implementing agent	Province
ADRA-SA	Eastern Cape and Free State
Kagisano	Gauteng
Action Development Agency	KwaZulu-Natal
Makotse Women's Club	Limpopo
Kago Yabana	Mpumalanga
Motswedi wa Sechaba	Northern Cape and North West
Ilitha Labantu	Western Cape

Pillar 2

151 276 Parcels (close to R56 million) were distributed through four large national food distribution non-profit organisations (NPOs) that have expansive reach across the country. These NPOs were shortlisted from an initial long list of 200 NPOs due to their capacity to deliver, track record in disaster relief, geographic footprint and networks, low intermediation and overhead costs, and ability to meet compliance requirements.

These NPOs delivered food to vulnerable communities through a network of over **400 community-based organisations** (including churches ECD centres, and feeding programmes, among others) within their networks.

Name of food distribution NPO	Province
Afrika Tikkun	Gauteng and Western Cape
Food Forward South Africa	Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, North West and Western Cape
Islamic Relief	Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape
Lunchbox Fund	Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape

Pillar 3

69 000 Parcels (close to R27.5 million) were distributed through 17 community-based and faith-based organisations at a provincial and local level. These organisations were specifically selected based on their ability to fill certain geographic gaps that were not reached through Pillars 1 and 2.

Each of these organisations delivered the parcels through their local networks. The Fund contracted with two logistics companies – Shop2Shop and LOAD Kamoso – to source, pack, track and deliver parcels to the CBOs.

The distribution partners for Pillar 3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC2 (Nedlac community constituency) • Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) • Community Chest • Gauteng Food Security Committee • Hope Africa (the Anglican Church) • Hlanganisa • Inqaba Yokulinda (Nedlac community constituency) • MEJCON • Ndifuna Ukwazi (C-19 People's Coalition) • Rural Democracy Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SANGONet • Show Me Your Number (Nedlac community constituency) • Social Change Assistance Trust • Socio-Economic Rights Institute (C-19 People's Coalition) • SA Youth Movement (Nedlac community constituency) • Women's Legal Centre • Zenzele

Pillar 4

23 500 Vouchers are being distributed in partnership with the South African Council of Churches (SACC).

Through this partnership, the Fund seeks to achieve two goals:

- To provide food relief to households.
- To help build a scalable model for reaching households digitally that can be used by other relief organisations in the future.

The SACC is providing support through a wide variety of voucher and cash transfer solutions, including those that reach the informal economy. The vouchers are being distributed across all nine provinces and are focused on beneficiaries who have not been reached by other relief efforts (including Pillars 1 – 3 above).

03 PROGRESS

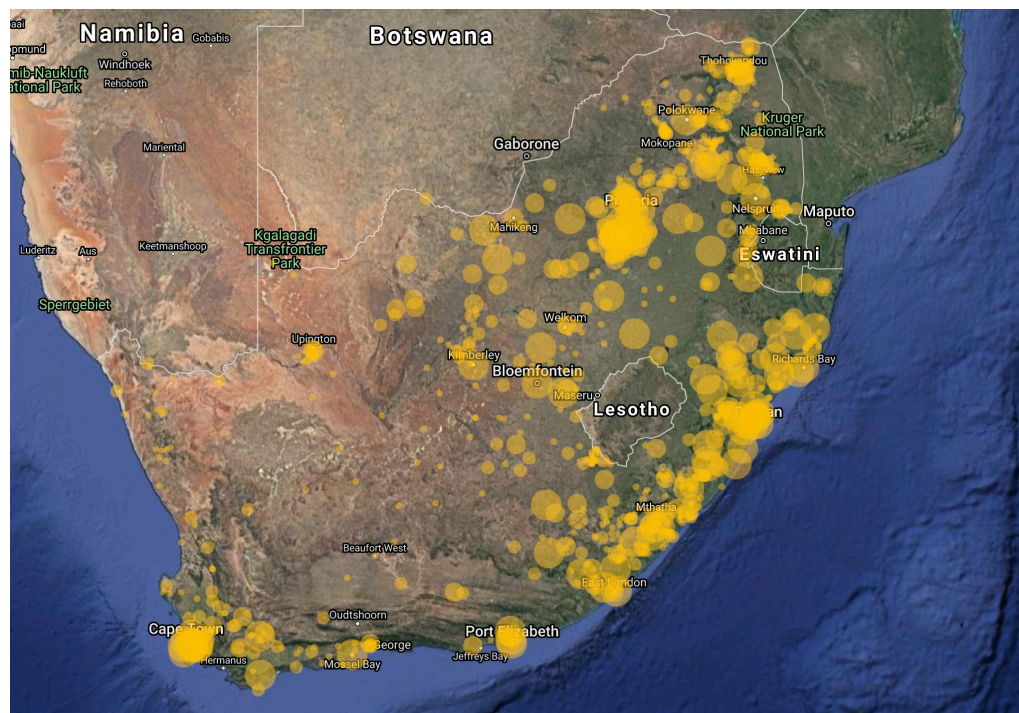
Through the partnerships we have built and the efficiencies we have gained, the Solidarity Fund has been able to exceed the original targets set. **We now expect to deliver emergency relief to over 300 000 households rather than the 250 000 originally targeted, using the same funding envelope.**

The Fund has confirmed distribution of 280 000 parcels to households. We are targeting to reach a further 23 500 households with food vouchers by mid-June.

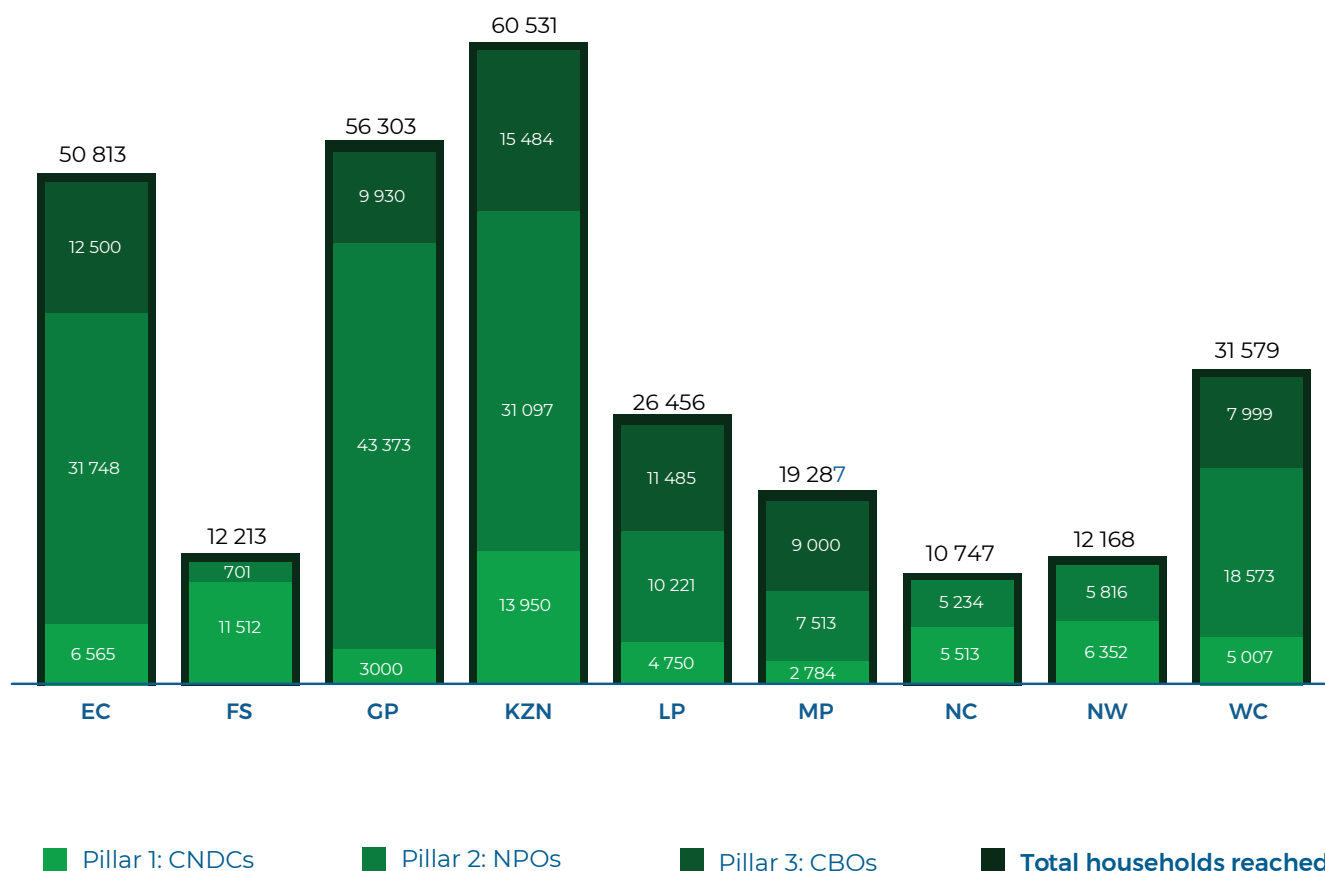
Completed food parcel deliveries as of 22 May

Number of parcels delivered:

- 0 – 86
- 90 – 250
- 256 – 750
- 756 – 10 669



TOTAL FOOD PARCELS DELIVERED



04

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Fund actively managed the monitoring and evaluation of the food relief programme. Each partner was expected to provide a daily report on deliveries, including a summary of where the parcels were delivered to, how many households, and under what kind of circumstances. They also provided highlights and challenges.

- The Fund team collated data across all four Pillars and put together consolidated reports three times a week that allowed us to track deliveries and solve problems around delays.
- Each partner was expected to produce a closeout report at the end of the contract, which includes a list of beneficiaries served.
- As a final step, the Fund contracted with an external party to independently contact a sample of beneficiaries to
 - (a) confirm that a parcel was indeed received; and
 - (b) gather qualitative feedback about the impact of the food parcels around the country.

Through the one-month period of delivery, the Fund experienced a number of challenges in delivering food parcels.

- 1 Safety and security during deliveries in the context of need far surpassing existing allocations. This slowed down trucks making deliveries to warehouses as well as last-mile deliveries.
- 2 Challenges in keeping a wide variety of stakeholders continuously informed, given the pace and scale of the effort in a short time frame.
- 3 Supply chain stock-outs – particularly of maize meal and lentils – causing delays in deliveries and substitutions in food parcel items.

The Fund undertook an extremely large food distribution process over a four-week period under challenging social conditions as laid above. Through this process, many lessons were learned that should inform future humanitarian efforts.

- 1 CBOs and NGOs have a critical role to play in both identifying beneficiaries and reaching them with their capacity for last-mile distribution. While there is a risk of duplication with many NGOs doing food distribution, they are critical to reach and scale of any humanitarian effort.
- 2 There were challenges with transporting the vegetables, particularly butternut, even if purchased locally. On average, parcels are in transport or storage for five days before deliveries are complete, which can make distributing vegetables challenging.
- 3 Coordination with government at district level could have been undertaken sooner than it was. While many of our partners worked with the DSD to ensure that many of the beneficiaries on their lists were served, this process could have been more consistently streamlined across all provinces.
- 4 The Fund prioritised getting support to as many households as possible, and had good reasons for choosing a R400 food basket. However, we received feedback that the parcel contents were inadequate to serve larger families. Should there be another food relief effort, we will take this feedback into consideration.
- 5 The Fund is cognisant that future food relief solutions should focus on supporting local economies and supply chains. This includes connecting small holder farmers to market and supporting the food commons.

These lessons will be learnt from and shared with others to improve processes going forward and inform planning of future humanitarian efforts of the Fund.