



NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP

Community Partners Impact Report

BENEFICIARY/IES	AMOUNT APPROVED	AMOUNT DISBURSED
COVID Comms; C-19 People's Coalition (C-19) and Community Constituency COVID-19 Front (CCF)	R 8 000 000	R 8 000 000

01

THE SOLIDARITY FUND MANDATE

COVID-19 has changed the way that the world operates, and South Africa is no exception. The intention of The Solidarity Fund has always been to provide accurate and universal COVID-19 information through awareness campaigns, with the aim of improving the public's understanding of the pandemic and its implications. These campaigns can help address misinformation and misunderstanding about the virus, and to change the behaviours of others that can protect not only the individual but the country as a whole.

This is no small objective, and for The Fund to succeed, it was imperative to engage with community partners, who are optimally placed within the public sector. These partnerships enable The Fund to extend its reach and engage with as many South Africans as possible in the fight to eradicate COVID-19. It was agreed that the three civil society organisations (discussed below) will not operate in a standalone fashion but rather collaborate in both content creation and distribution as well as social mobilisation.

02

PARTNERS

The Fund collaborated with three community partners that are represented in the National Communication Partnership (NCP) that is directed by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS).

COVID Comms

COVID Comms was formed very soon after the national lockdown in March 2020 started. The organisation aims to provide useful information about the pandemic to everyone living in South Africa. Their core principles were, and remain, to produce credible informative content. This content is provided in local languages and are designed to be easily understood. A strong

emphasis is placed on the use of local language and translation, to create content that is inclusive of all who consume it. It is readily available on easy to use, well known digital platforms.

The COVID Comms mandate is to expand their work, enabling them to provide free and easily accessed content explaining COVID-19 principles and prevention in multiple languages. The challenge to expand beyond their existing distribution channels led to collaborative efforts with community-based organisations, to provide them with accurate information and resources.

C-19 People's Coalition (C-19)

C-19 established the People's Vaccine Campaign SA (PVC-SA), to ensure that the South African response to the pandemic is effective, just, and equitable. A central focus was to ensure that the needs of the most marginal groups in our country were met in relation to COVID-19. With The Fund, C-19 aimed to develop and amplify their behaviour change and vaccine roll-out campaigns, including the need to provide large-scale workshops on vaccinations and vaccination programmes.

Community Constituency Covid-19 Front (CCF)

CCF was established and is led by SANAC Civil Society Forum (CSF) and the NEDLAC Community Trust. The aim of the organisation is to facilitate the participation of civil society sectors, networks, and their constituent member organisations, in the national response and implementation of community-based measures in response to the pandemic.

Under the umbrella of the CCF, over 10 000 NPCs, tribal councils, faith-based organisations, co-operatives, and civic organisations are involved in fighting the spread of COVID-19 and encouraging people to vaccinate. Of these, 3821 have been verified on the CCF database, providing an expansive reach.

In May 2021, CCF was provided with a grant by The Solidarity Fund as part of funding the civil society organisations that were already implementing COVID-19 measures as part of the National Communications Partnerships (NCP). It is within this context that the CCF was funded to implement community-based measures.

03

REACH

Reach and accessibility are incredibly important when project goals centre around behaviour change. It is necessary to provide access to everyone, using multiple language options and providing information on platforms easily accessible to the public. Each partner had their own approach to information and content, as they operated in various sectors and their audiences differed. We discuss the reach and content created by our partners below, with examples of content given where possible.



COVID Comms

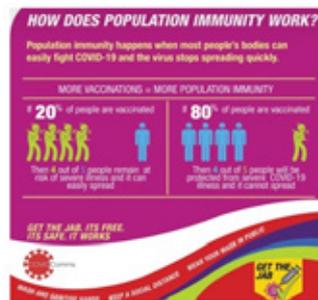
COVID Comms managed to deliver most of the original content under budget and redirected surplus funds to produce additional content and translations above their original brief. To date, COVID Comms produced and distributed the following content with the assistance of The Fund:

- **200+** digital and printable infographics¹
- **12+** animated PSA's
- **12+** live-action PSA's
- **15** audio PSA's
- **3** Covid Champions mini-documentaries
- **20** influencer videos with various artists and sports people²

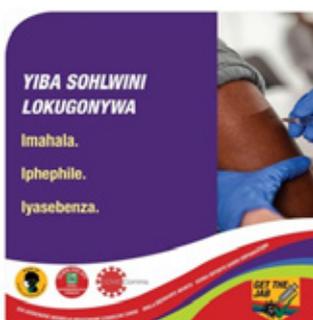


For the *Prevent the 4th Wave* campaign, COVID Comms ran cautionary traffic sign styled ads in seven local languages including Khoi.

COVID Comms was able to provide printable material to other non-profit organisations that they could distribute in their own communities. In addition to formal production and distribution, members of the leadership team had an active role in public discussions around COVID-19 communications on several media platforms, including SABC, Newzroom Afrika, ENCA, eTV, Daily Maverick, News24, The Citizen, the Sowetan and the Independent Group.



COVID Comms produced several graphics outlining facts and fiction about Vaccinations, Herd Immunity, Vaccine uptake and other COVID-19-related topics, in a variety of local languages.



¹ Most infographics have been translated into five languages (other than English) and some into 14 languages. This included the only material in the country translated into Khoikhoi.
² Currently being released.

C-19 People's Coalition (C-19)

Ahead of the anticipated fourth wave of infections, predicted to strike the country in December 2021, the drive for more people to be vaccinated, particularly the most vulnerable, is now more important than before. To date, and with the assistance of The Fund, C-19 has been able to engage in the following:

- **Train the individuals** who lead Community Vaccine Literacy Workshops
- **100 000** PVC posters^{3,4}
- **Video documentary** titled, *"Vaccines – Conspiracies and Fake News"*
- **4** radio features
- **Transport and subsistence allowances for 300 individuals** during the National Vaccine Monitoring Group's *"Week of Action"*
- **650** branded T-shirts (to improve visibility and awareness of the PVC)

Community Constituency Covid-19 Front (CCF)

CCF's communication and public awareness campaigns focused on the importance of community empowerment, through scientific and accurate information about COVID-19. To ensure that their contribution to the media and communications landscape is meaningful, CCF created and continue to implement their media and communications campaign under the banner of *#ThinkTwiceAboutCOVID*.

Everyday content is created and distributed across all CCF's social media pages. Content includes COVID-19 vaccine articles and community stories, which are designed to effectively engage various audiences. CCF noted that content on COVID-19 prevention measures is particularly popular at the moment, especially their video content and the stories that depict neighbourhood agents on the ground doing field work. Daily posts have managed to reach large numbers of people in South Africa.

CCF has provided a variety of content, including:

- **39** broadcasts across community and online radio
- **18** articles published in regional, national, and community newspapers
- **5** online publications
- **485** social media posts on Facebook
- **1 491** shared Twitter posts
- **464** Instagram posts
- **44** YouTube posts
- **42** Tik-Tok posts
- **440** multimedia and informational content across various media platforms

³Currently being printed.

⁴These will be distributed as part of community grassroots campaigns which is expected to reach an even wider audience.

IMPACT

As each of our partners engaged in various programmes, the impact and reach of each organisation will be discussed separately.

COVID Comms

As COVID Comms produced predominantly social media content surrounding COVID-19 and vaccination programmes, the impact of their content has reflected through their social media engagement.

Website

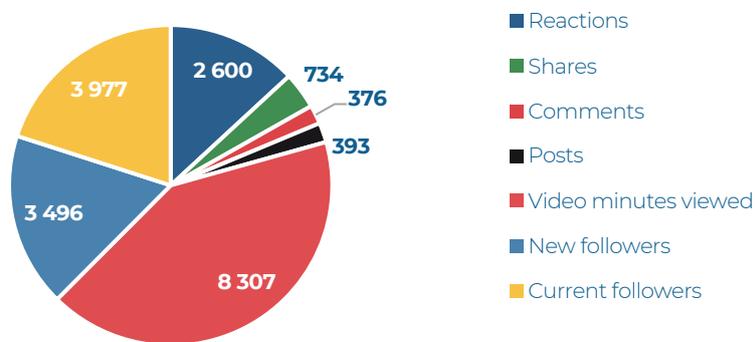
The following indicators were noted on the COVID Comms website, which can be found at <https://covidcomms.org.za/>.

Unique Users	5 600
Sessions	7 300
Bounce Rate	45.97%
Average Session Duration	99 seconds

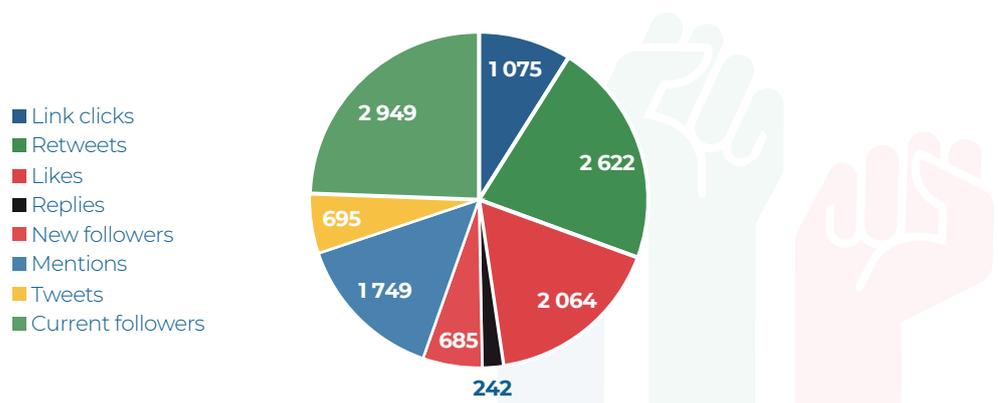
Social Media

The content was distributed on Facebook and Twitter. The following graphs reflect the content's social media engagement. A total of **1 376 900** impressions were noted on Twitter and a total engagement rate of **1.05%** was observed.

Facebook Reach



Twitter Reach



COVID Comms has also received the following commitments:

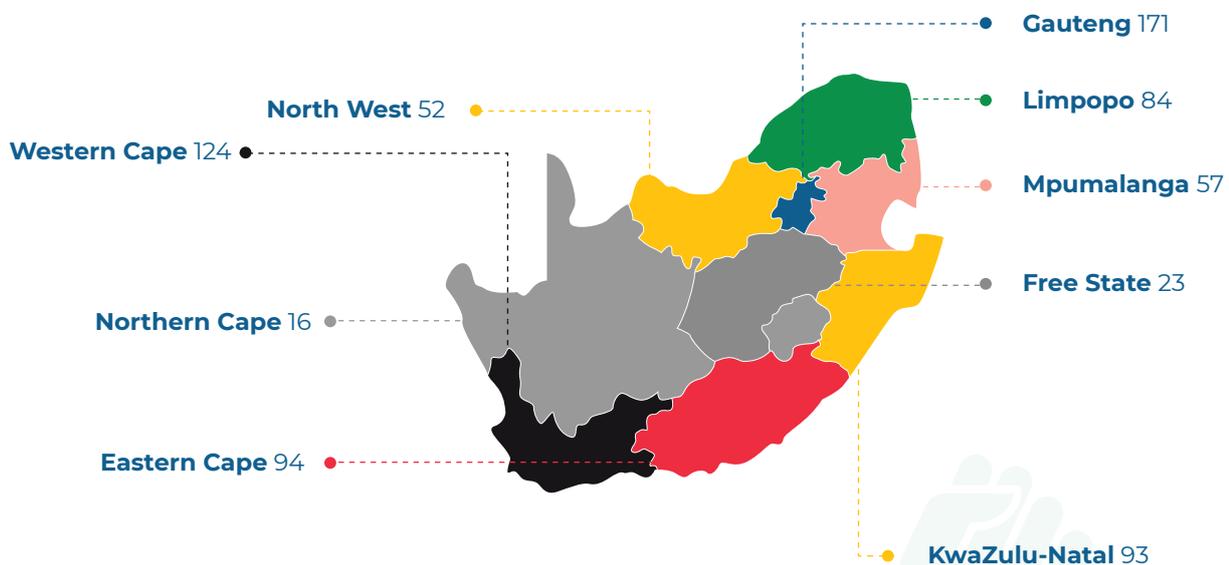
Media House	Item	Value
SABC	Radio Slots	R800 000
	TV Slots	R800 000
Multichoice	TV Slots	R800 000
Primedia	PSA Slots	-
News24	Infographics in articles	-
Daily Maverick	Infographics in articles	-
E Media Holdings	PSA's	-
AdReach	Street Pole Advertising	R3 000 000

Prior to this grant funding, COVID Comms content distribution had also taken place on WhatsApp. This is unfortunately difficult to track, however, COVID Comms is regularly distributing content to **14 WhatsApp groups**. This reaches an estimated **1 000+ individuals**, and the content is forwarded broadly.

C-19 People's Coalition (C-19)

September has been an exceptionally good month for the PVC programme, with the training of more than **700 individuals** on how to perform peer-to-peer community education across all nine provinces. The PVC program has also conducted **171 workshops** in various communities situated in seven provinces so far.⁵

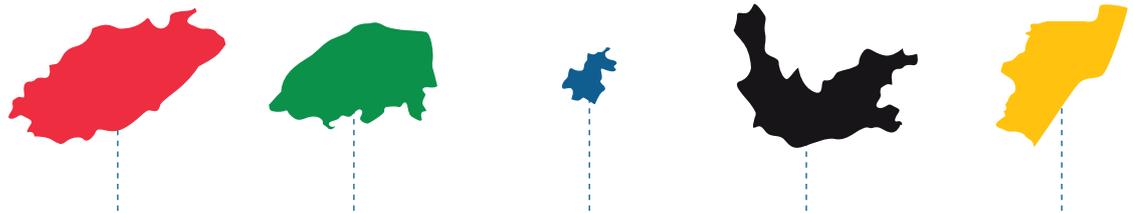
Below is a provincial breakdown of the amount of workshop presenters trained through the PVC program.



A total of **714 workshop presenters** were trained. This is a **238% increase** over the original estimation of 300 people. PVC has managed to conduct **171 (81.4%)** vaccine literacy workshops of their 210 target. The aim is to educate a total of 4 200 community members and to date, **3 425 (81.5%)** have been trained.

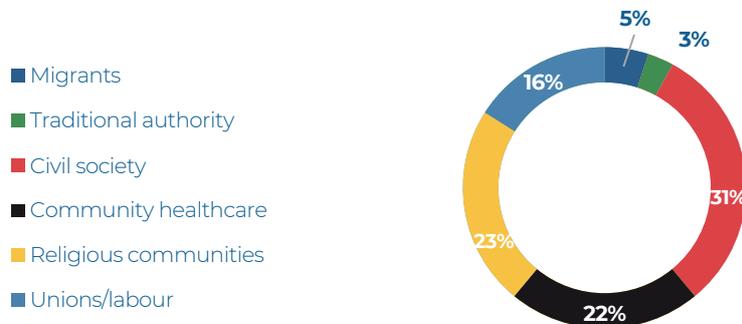
⁵Community Vaccine Literacy workshops in the Free State and Northern Cape are scheduled to begin in the first week of October 2021.

Some provincial highlights included:

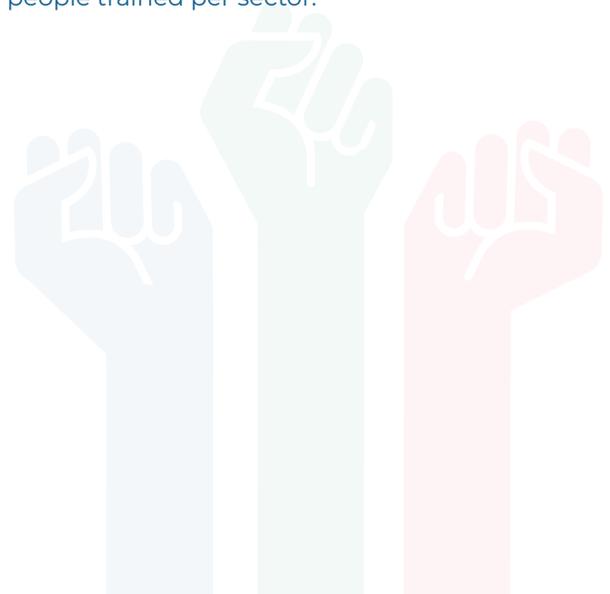


Eastern Cape	Limpopo	Gauteng	Western Cape	KwaZulu-Natal
<p>Community workshops done with the Community Work Program (CWP).</p> <p>Attendees from the Home-Based Care workstream, enhancing their skill base.</p>	<p>60 participants decided to go for their vaccinations as soon as the sessions were completed, enlightened by what they learned.</p>	<p>All district and local municipalities are covered.</p> <p>Targeted Clinic Committees and ward committees who deal with COVID cases daily.</p> <p>Door-to-door visits in informal settlements.</p>	<p>Special attention given to migrants, asylum seekers as well as the homeless who are now running sessions with their constituencies.</p>	<p>Working closely with Traditional Authorities gave the campaign credibility and the necessary approvals to operate in rural areas.</p>

% of Workshop leaders trained per sector



Collaboration is a crucial aspect of this kind of project. Various sectors were engaged, and the following graphic breaks down the percentage of people trained per sector.



Community Constituency Covid-19 Front (CCF)

Online Radio Broadcasts

CCF has their own online radio station platform available at <http://smynonlinerradio.airtime.pro/>. Content has been produced every week and broadcasted on Wednesdays since June 2021. The multimedia content is then also distributed across CCF's social media platforms. Through the radio programme, "**Think Twice about COVID-19**", broadcasts included topics like:

"Your voice counts! Why UNICEF's UReport Vaccine Survey Matters" – 18 Aug 2021

"Vaccine at a workplace" – 25 Aug 2021

"Vaccine Education and People with Disabilities" – 4 Sep 2021

"Access to vaccinations in rural areas" – 11 Sep 2021

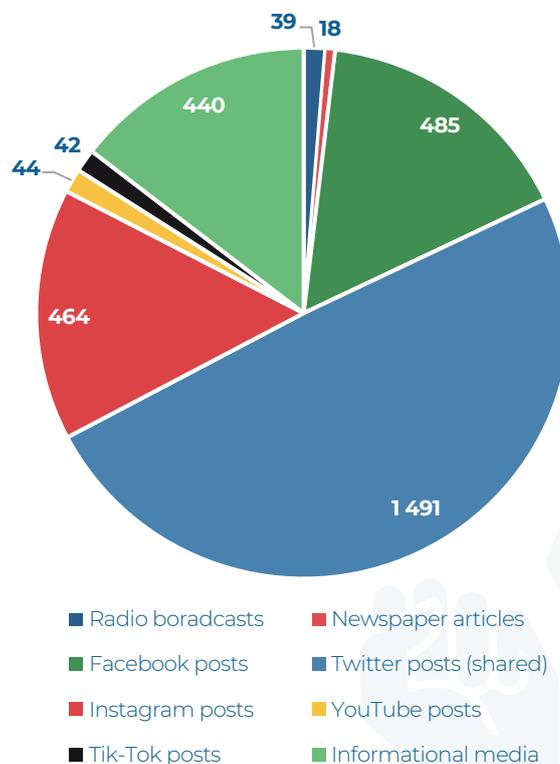
"Encouraging men to get vaccinated" – 22 Sep 2021

Social Media

CCF has a presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and Tik-Tok. Their social media strategy centred itself around consistent content publication across all these channels. This way, the content was related and complimentary from one account to another. During this reporting period, CCF increased their mentions above the benchmark across all their social media platforms.

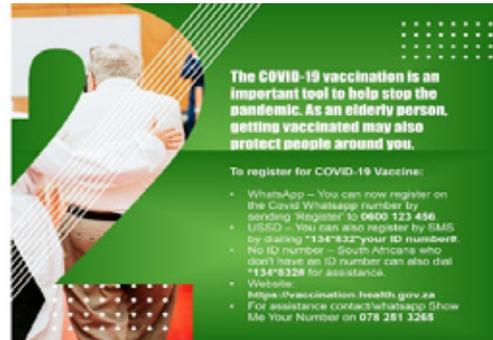
On Facebook, the number of followers and fans has increased dramatically, with the CCF page reaching approximately **237 902 users**⁶. The CCF Twitter account has **116 followers**, and over **2 000 profile visits**. CCF engaged with twitter followers, including Radio 2000 and the National Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The engagements led to recognition from other media houses, such as City Press, Daily Sun, SABC News, the Daily Maverick and others.

Media output



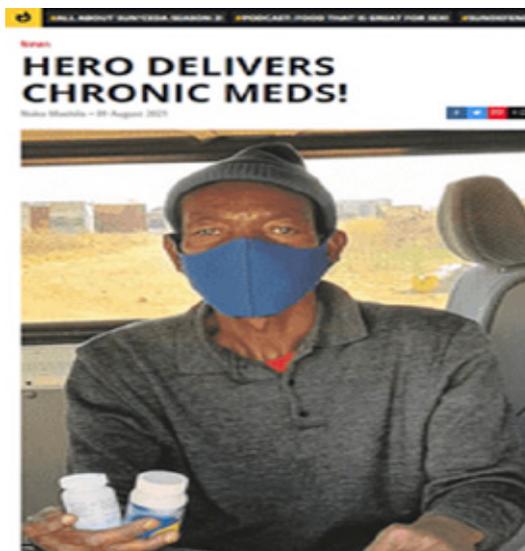
⁶Numbers noted for the period of April – September 2021.

The images below are examples of marketing and branding messages that were designed and distributed on social media.



Public Relations Efforts

The CCF has considerably increased their reach through engagement on social media. A collaboration with the Daily Sun saw 14 articles published in the newspaper, enabling a greater reach through human interest stories based on the CCF leadership, neighbourhood agents and beneficiaries of their services.





Social Mobilisation and Community Engagement

In this aspect of the project, CCF aligned themselves to the overarching efforts put in place by government, business, labour, and civil society. These efforts included promoting public health and socio-economic sustainability. Considering the importance of culture and tradition in relation to health and well-being in many rural and urban settings in South Africa, it was important to engage with communities to establish specific needs they may have pertaining to COVID-19.

Demand generation and social mobilisation driven and implemented by the Neighbourhood Agents (whose efforts include driving advocacy and compliance with the NPIs) enabled the CCF to provide access to accurate and important information through channels accepted and engaged with in these various communities. This engagement helps CCF to understand issues related to vaccinations, compliance with NPIs and other COVID-19 regulations in a variety of communities.

The below images are images taken during community Engagement.





A total of **404 Neighbourhood Agents (NAs)** and ambassadors have begun assisting people with vaccination queries and disseminating information and surveys gathering data on vaccine hesitancy and general attitudes towards COVID-19. Through a total of **261 activations**, CCF, through their NAs, reached approximately **62 344 people** and provided educational messages on COVID-19 SBC and Vaccination. Around **20 279 surveys** have been administered and recorded on CCF's *Communities Matter* Web App. NAs handed out over **1 600 printed IEC flyers** and assisted **15 232 people** in registering on the EVDS portal.

Through this social mobilisation, some key findings were also made apparent. For instance, it was identified that men in rural areas may need more encouragement to vaccinate, as they show higher levels of reluctance. Another observation is that people in rural areas need more assistance registering on the EVDS system. People within the 35+ age range struggled to register, some due to a lack of literacy. Finally, a number of people indicated the possible need for mobile vaccination clinics, to introduce easily accessible vaccinations to people in remote rural areas.



KEY CHALLENGES

The Fund is very aware, through its engagement with various organisations and programmes, that it is important to identify the challenges that arise throughout projects of this kind. Our partners identified their specific challenges and learnings, which will now be discussed.

COVID Comms

Over the course of six months, COVID Comms identified the following two challenges:

Content

Content creation requires three things that posed challenges at times:

- a. keeping up with changes in science and strategy,
- b. keeping content fresh and interesting and,
- c. simplifying increasingly complex jargon.

COVID Comms addressed these issues in a range of ways. Firstly, they engaged with experts on the changing nature of science and strategy surrounding COVID-19. This engagement ensured that all information used in their content was accurate and didn't pose contradictions in the changing climate. COVID Comms also assisted in the development of a glossary of terms that has been translated into all 11 official South African languages to guide with simplifying the language from technical and scientific jargon in more standardized ways. Finally, they changed the look and feel of the programme to be bolder and have increasingly used new mediums to communicate messages.

Distribution

networks that are not only able to reach communities in far flung areas but also have the requisite trust and mobilization capacity to encourage people to share the information with others. The content must be simple enough to empower people who receive it to use it as a base to engage others.

Distribution groups that are language specific were identified as a solution to the problem above. COVID Comms has endeavoured to tailor their work on vaccinations and infections to increase impact through the designing of tools that aim to empower individuals to pass the information on, either as it was received, or through the ability to converse about the content within their communities.

C-19 People's Coalition (C-19)

Due to unforeseen delays with C-19 People's Coalition, the contract end-period has been extended from September 2021 to December 2021. At completion, C-19 People's Coalition will provide a detailed report that will include challenges experienced in the implementation of the project.



Community Constituency Covid-19 Front (CCF)

The CCF identified the following challenges over the reporting period:

Coordination

Coordination for greater impact is key and critical internally within the different civil society organisations. Measures are required to ensure coordination at an individual organisational level, and at a collective level, to reach the desired goals. Furthermore, the coordination and collaboration between the collective civil society organisations and government and other social partners (business and labour) is mission-critical so that greater impact can be achieved. The creation of working platforms like the War Room, NCP and NRRTT and linkages with the NAJOINTS ensures better coordination.

Social Mobilisation

A great amount of social mobilization is required to address vaccine hesitancy which is primarily based on fears people have and misinformation that is peddled across social media platforms. Vaccine hesitancy due to lack of information in rural and urban communities is slowly changing after the great groundwork being done by the CCF alongside other civil society organisations. Social Media campaigns are only impactful when there is consistent engagement between organisation leaders and the community and general public. There is a need for continued awareness raising in our communities in all languages, on all media platforms to ensure that issues and their updates remain high in the daily agenda of society.

06

CONCLUSION

This is the final impact report for Covid Comms and CCF, as their contracts have come to an end. C-19 People's Coalition experienced unforeseen delays, and so this report will act as the interim report on their progress. Their final report will be issued after the contract extension period which concludes in December 2021. With the closing out of these projects, the focus of the Behaviour Change pillar has shifted to supporting the vaccine rollout programme. The Fund will be requesting proposals from these community based organisations, in response to the demand to encourage as many adult South Africans as possible to get vaccinated. These new agreements are anticipated to commence in October 2021.

