



SOLIDARITY FUND YEAR-END MEDIA UPDATE

17 DECEMBER 2021

Johannesburg, 17 December 2021 – If the last 20 months have taught us anything, it is to expect the unexpected when it comes to COVID-19. While a new variant of the virus was to be expected, the number of mutations of the latest Omicron strain took many scientists by surprise, and left the global community grappling for a response. While the exact impact of this highly mutated and more transmissible variant is still under investigation, what is clear is that, as a country, we need to stay focused and committed to fighting this virus in any way that we can. As we enter the holiday season, the anticipated 4th wave has come to fruition and vigilance is essential.

In March 2022, The Solidarity Fund turns 2 years old. At the time of establishment, few imagined that the need for The Fund would last this long. Just as the virus itself has changed, our role in the fight against the pandemic is continually evolving as we adapt to changing needs and direct our programmes and funds for maximum impact. The Fund has focused on supporting the national vaccination rollout programme since inception and considers vaccines our best weapon in the fight against COVID-19. The Fund continues working tirelessly to help mitigate against vaccine inertia and increasing access through programmes within its behavioural change and communication, and the health response pillars.

Additional to the COVID-19 pandemic response, the Fund has furthermore, since July 2021, focused on the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund (HCRF) announced by President Cyril Ramphosa to respond to the humanitarian and medical crisis that arose as a consequence of the civil unrest in Gauteng and Kwazulu-Natal. While the urgent need was not directly COVID-related, the unrest had an increased and severe effect on the communities already negatively affected by the pandemic. The Solidarity Fund was seen as an ideal vehicle through which to separately administer the HCRF, due to its proven ability to respond rapidly and with impact.

FUNDS RECEIVED AND DISBURSEMENTS UPDATE

To date, the Solidarity Fund has received R3,45 billion in funding for its COVID relief efforts and has disbursed R2,90 billion across its Health (R2,103 billion on 33 projects), Humanitarian (R390 million on 6 projects and 11 sub-projects) and Behavioural Change (R410 million on 13 projects and 26 sub-projects) Pillars.

A total of R672 million has been pledged to the HCRF, with R597 million received for its Business Recovery, Humanitarian and Food Relief Pillars. Six projects with a combined value of R447 million have been approved and are in execution phase. R232 million has been disbursed to date.

COVID RELIEF – KEY PROGRAMMES UPDATES

- **Vaccine Roll-out**

Outreach sites are essential to providing vaccines to the uninsured and taking the vaccine to those who live in hard-to-reach areas such as small towns and rural settings. R171 million has been allocated to the programme and, to date, 183 Outreach Sites have been stood up with 12 Clinical Operators supporting districts and provinces in the vaccine delivery programme. Over 427 000 jabs have been administered since the start of the outreach programme, which began in August 2021 at SASSA payout points to ensure that the elderly over 60s were protected.

The Fund's Vaccine Capacitation and Technical Assistance to NDOH (R69 million allocation). The Fund joined other donors and allocated R69m to an initiative to support the NDoH with technical expertise and human resource capacity that is needed to coordinate the COVID vaccine roll out programme at national, provincial and district levels. To date R30m has been allocated to strengthen HR capacity and R10m to support demand acceleration activities.

HSRC National COVID-19 Antibody Survey

The Fund proudly supported this research project to provide the first national estimates of prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in South Africa based on a representative sample of the population. R40m was allocated to support this study whose results were released recently and showed that an estimated more than 8.6 million people from ages 12 years and older were already exposed to COVID in June 2021, which was 6.5 times higher than the cumulative number of cases reported then from PCR tests done.

- **Vaccine Demand Creation Campaign**

#RollUpYourSleevesSA – R135 million was approved for the large-scale integrated vaccine demand creation communication campaign in partnership with the NDoH. Launched in late September, and running through to January 2022, it includes a fully integrated media campaign, as well as community mobilisers doing door-to-door activations and mobilisation for outreach sites. To date, key campaign results are as follows:

- 30,5 million adults reached on Television
- 32,2 million adults reached on Radio
- 27,4 million unique people reached via Digital Out of Home
- Over 136 million digital impressions and 16 million completed video views
- More than 400 000 clicks to the [SAcoronavirus.co.za](https://www.sacoronavirus.co.za) active vaccination sites resource
- 920 community mobilisers active at 97 surge sites across all nine provinces.
- Vooma Vaccination weekends have been supported and amplified through media and digital platforms.

National Vaccine Call Centre – The Solidarity Fund continues to support the Call centre through its R72 million programme allocation to enable the public's access to vaccine registration and accurate and reliable clinical support and information, providing continued

COVID related services through a four-tiered service package. Tier 1 and 2 are managed by trained centre agents to resolve general enquiries and registration on EVDS. The tier 3 and 4 services deal with health-related enquiries which primarily occur post-vaccination. Support in 5 official languages is offered (English, Afrikaans, Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa) and the call centre Toll Free Hotline 0800 029 999 is now operational on a 24/7 basis. The call centre is projected to have handled 1 million calls by the end of Friday, 17 December 2021.

National Communications Partnership (NCP) – In addition to the demand creation campaign, the Fund approved R12m in funding to the NCP Community Partners, namely Covid Comms, COVID-19 Community Constituency Front (CCF) and the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The funding was approved in order enable the partners to intensify community driven vaccine demand creation through various media channels, door-to-door mobilisation, community town hall engagements and workshops which kicked off in October.

- **Hospital Capacitation and Support**

The Charlotte Maxeke Hospital programme – The Fund approved an amount of R68 million for the refurbishment of Block One of CMJAH in anticipation of the fourth wave which was projected to coincide with the festive season. Priority has been given to level 6 of Block 1, the acute emergency unit that receives acutely sick Covid patients. To date, substantial work has been carried out and acceptance of patients is imminent with work on two-thirds of Level 6 completed. The balance of Level 6 is due for completion on or before the 28th of January 2022. Phase two of the project consists of the refurbishment of the balance of Block One and is scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2022.

Essential Equipment - To date R281,4 million worth of essential equipment has been provided to hospitals across all 9 provinces, with a further R140 million worth of equipment expected to be delivered by the end of March 2022.

The Eastern Cape and Gauteng Nurses projects were aimed at providing much needed support to hospitals in the run-up to the peak of the 3rd wave and additional support post wave as nurses provided ongoing services in the COVID wards. Eastern Cape and Gauteng were identified as high-need areas with R39 million and R16 million in funding approved respectively. The projects have been a success with key hospitals being capacitated to handle the surge in patients. As the country enters the 4th wave, the project's ongoing success has ensured that nurses are already in place and equipped to assist.

To date the Gauteng nurses support has provided over 5500 Covid nurse shifts cover in 8 major hospitals in the province (Chris Hani Bara, Charlotte Maxeke, Kalafong, George Mukhari, Helen Joseph, Steve Biko, Tembisa and Tshwane District). Expenditure to date is at R11,3m of R16,69m. A total of 137 nurses have been placed to support the ECDOH vaccine outreach drive. These comprise 73 Professional Nurses and 64 Enrolled Nurses.

HUMAN CRISIS RELIEF FUND (HCRF) UPDATE

Immediately following the announcement of the HCRF establishment, the Solidarity Fund approved R100 million in funding to support the Department of Social Development for the procurement, packaging and distribution of food parcels to 142,000 households. In addition, funding of R20 million was approved to distribute food parcels to 21 560 targeted

households in partnership with Provincial Houses of Traditional Leaders at 196 traditional council sites in KZN.

The HCRF's Business Recovery Pillar has approved R150 million in funding in partnership with The National Empowerment Fund (NEF), aimed at establishing a R450m **SMME Support Programme** targeting small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) with an annual turnover of over R3m that were negatively impacted by the unrest in Gauteng and the Kwazulu-Natal. To date R544m has been allocated to a number of SMMEs - R411m from the NEF and R134.9m from the Solidarity Fund grant. The initiative has already saved 2434 direct jobs by ensuring that the SMMEs are awarded the required financial injection to resuscitate their businesses.

A further allocation of R62 million has been approved and ringfenced for support of 900 **SMMEs** with revenue of less than R3 million per annum. The programme will be implemented in partnership with Afrika Tikkun and FNB.

The HCRF undertook extensive mapping of the civil society sector following the unrest and identified an ongoing need for funding within civil society and communities. Funding of R50 million was approved for **Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs)** seeking support in implementing activities related to Food security, Health care, Economic recovery, Peace building, and Direct NPO support.

To assist vulnerable informal traders and workers, the HCRF will provide a once-off R3,000 **Digital Cash Voucher** which can be used for food, hygiene products and essentials. R62 million has been allocated for this intervention that is expected to reach approximately 20 000 former employees and informal traders in the two provinces.

"When I look back on the lifespan of the Solidarity Fund, I marvel at what has been achieved. Under the most trying circumstances, with the odds very often stacked against us, the team of donors, volunteers and partners have brought to fruition dozens of projects that have made an impact in the lives of individuals and organisations. While I long for the day when the Fund is no longer needed, while it is, I have confidence that together we can continue to make a positive difference to our country and people. As always, I urge everyone to continue to do their part by adhering to the basic prevention principles of mask wearing, ventilation and social distancing. Above all, our best weapon against the pandemic and to keep South Africans safe is to vaccinate." *Tandi Nzimande, CEO of The Solidarity Fund.*

For detailed information and reporting about donations received, projects and approvals, as well as the impact the Fund is having, visit www.solidarityfund.co.za

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