SOLIDARITY FUND STAKEHOLDER BULLETIN January 2022







MESSAGE FROM

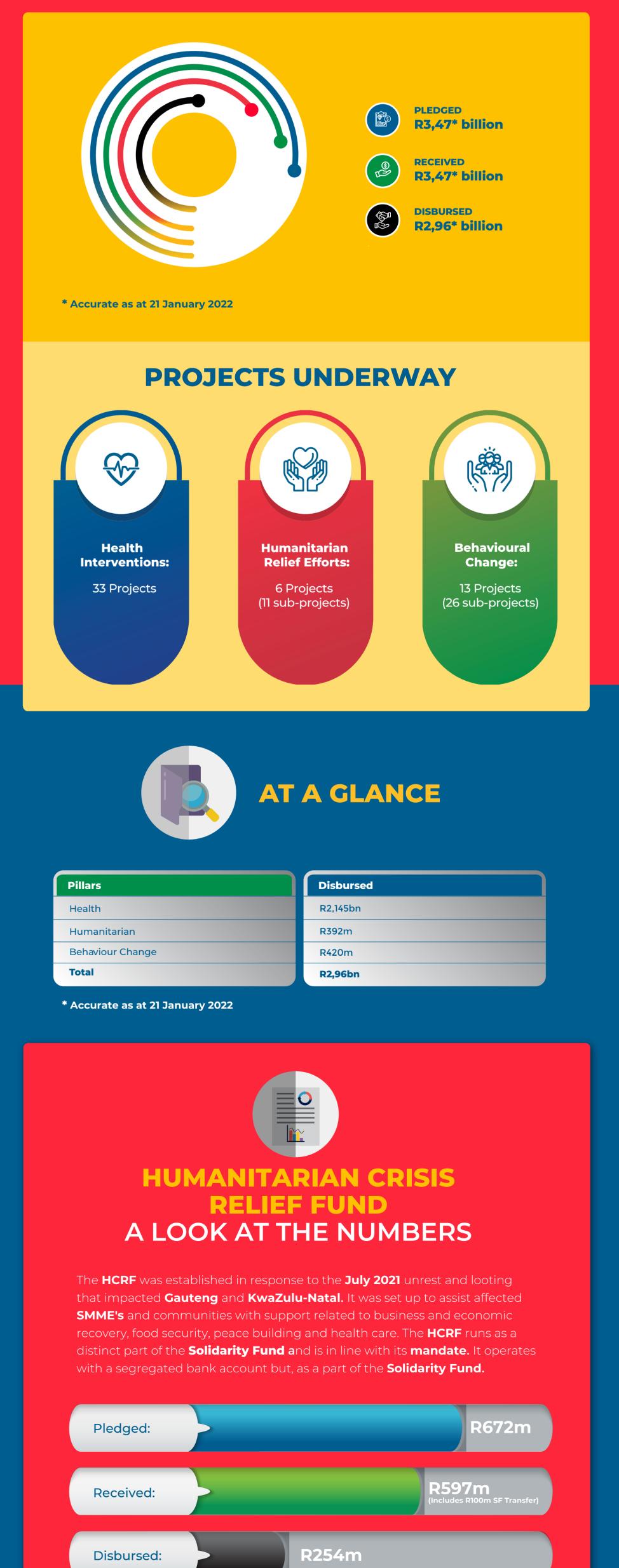
Welcome to **2022**, and the **first newsletter** of the new year. As I look ahead, I am cautiously optimistic that **2022** will prove smoother sailing as we learn to live with "**the new normal**" and start rebuilding some of the things that our beautiful country has lost. That said, there will be challenges ahead but, we are all **two years older**, wiser and stronger, and more equipped to face whatever **COVID-19** puts in our path.

December saw our country stay on Adjusted Alert Level One, with a few important adjustments, allowing the country to open up in time for the festive season. The curfew was lifted for the first time since lockdown started, and the number of people able to gather in one space (either inside or outside) increased. The decision was made based on the trajectory of the pandemic, the levels of vaccination in the country and the available capacity within the health sector. Omicron, however, remains a threat and the Solidarity Fund will continue our important work in support of the National Government Vaccination Roll-out Programme. We are also continuing our activities in support of vital existing interventions such as supporting small business through the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund (HCRF) and further assisting subsistence farmers through a third phase of the Farming Inputs programme. The programme has proven to be a major success with a 99% redemption rate achieved for the first two phases.

As our work continues, I am happy to welcome a new team member who, I have no doubt, will bring fresh ideas, experience and energy to the **Fund**. **Dr Nozipho Sangweni** is joining us as **COO** and we all welcome her and look forward to working closely with her as we navigate the **Fund's next phase**.

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COVID RELIEF FUND A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS



*Accurate as at 21 January 2022



THE SOLIDARITY FUND APPOINTS A NEW COO



It is with great pleasure that we welcome **Dr Nozipho Sangweni** to the **Solidarity Fund** team, who joined as **Chief Operations Officer** at the beginning of **2022**. **Dr Sangweni** is a **medical doctor** with **executive management** experience in the **public**, **private** and **NGO sectors**. She has worked in various industries including aviation and health funding and, among other academic achievements, has attained executive education certificates from **Harvard Business School** and the **MIT Sloan School of Management**.

She is committed to working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders **locally** and **internationally** in promoting access to affordable quality care. In her role as the **Chief Operations Officer** at the **Fund**, she is keen to contribute actively to the public health response to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, working in partnership with **government**, **civil society organisations**, and the **private sector**.

Welcome **Dr Sangweni**, we look forward to your insight, experience and leadership.



A HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY AS THE CHARLOTTE MAXEKE JOHANNESBURG ACADEMIC HOSPITAL REOPENS

Level 6 of Block One of the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital (CMJAH) is scheduled to reopen on the 14th of February 2022.

In June 2021, the Solidarity Fund was approached by the hospital's CEO to request assistance with the fire compliance requirements and refurbishment of Block One of CMJAH.

Block One, which contains all trauma and emergency admissions departments on Level 6, was prioritised in line with CMJAH's ambition to have this section open to relieve the pressure on surrounding hospitals. Priority Area 1 of Level 6 within Block One was scheduled to reopen on the 15th of December 2021. Due to mitigating factors, however, this was delayed until the 28th of January 2022. In a meeting held on the 11th of January 2022, Hospital Management and the stakeholders decided that the whole of Level 6 would be reopened at the same time – the 14th of February 2022. The reopening will provide much needed emergency and trauma capacity in the province. As per the original schedule, Block One completion date is on track for the 31st of May 2022.









CONTINUE TO GET MUCH NEEDED SUPPORT IN THIRD PHASE OF FARMING INPUTS

The Solidarity Fund's Farming Inputs Voucher programme has proven to be a resounding success with a redemption rate of 99%. Despite this, there is still a need to support the development of agricultural value chains, sustainable agriculture and food security, particularly for South Africans who have suffered job losses as a result of COVID-19, by providing agricultural inputs for own food production.

With that in mind, **The Solidarity Fund** board has approved **R52,8 million** for the implementation of a **third phase** of the **Farming Inputs Voucher Programme**. The programme will provide support to identified subsistence farmers, who did not benefit from the first **two phases** of the programme, by issuing them with farming input vouchers to the value of **R2 000** each. The aim is to facilitate self-employment, improve their livelihoods and to increase food production as well as access to food at a household level to meet basic food requirements. It is anticipated that the vouchers will benefit **25 000 households** and contribute towards the food security of approximately **125 000 individuals**.

The Solidarity Fund will continue to work with farmer groups, NGOs and established partners such as our technical partner, Mezzanine Ware, and implementation partners African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA), the Lima Rural Development Foundation and Lingelihle Farmers Agricultural Cooperative. Their experience and previous infrastructure will ensure transparent beneficiary identification, as well as the efficient disbursement, tracking and monitoring of the issuing and redemption of the vouchers.

Vouchers will be issued on an ongoing basis as **Mezzanine Ware** receives databases from partners. The voucher validity period comes to an end on **31 March 2022**, with reports from partners due by **30 April 2022**.



NATIONAL COVID-19 CALL CENTRE SURPASSES 1 MILLION CALLS

The NDOH Contact Centre surpassed the 1 million calls mark on the 17th of December 2021 – 7 months, to the day, after it first opened on the 17th of May 2021. This is a remarkable feat and demonstrates how the call centre has fulfilled a need within South Africa, providing accurate, **up-to-date information** and **assistance** on COVID-related issues.

As long as the **COVID-19 virus** continues to be a part of our daily lives, the need for access to reliable information remains. The **Fund** is committed to providing this access and has increased its funding of the national call centre in order to extend the service. The original funding of **R72 million**, helped establish the call centre and keep the lines open for the period between the **1**st of May 2021 and the **31**st of March 2022. The additional funding of **R18,7 million** will enable the call centre to continue servicing the public until the **end of June 2022**.



THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROGRAMME GETS EXTENDED

The community partners in the **National Communication Partnership** are proving to be a valuable asset in the spreading of the vaccine message to people across our country. Working within communities, and communicating in all the **11 official languages**, this programme is aimed at encouraging vaccine demand in the areas with the most unvaccinated populations. The **Fund** originally approved **R12m** in funding for this programme in order to support the **Community Constituency Front (CCF)**, **CovidComms** and the **South African Council of Churches (SACC)** to amplify the **national vaccine rollout** messaging, address community concerns and fears as well as to encourage vaccine uptake in largely unvaccinated populations. To further build on the success of this partnership, the **Fund** has approved an additional **R7,85m** for the work of the community partners so they can continue with the implementation of **community engagements**, **social mobilisation**, **vaccination dialogues**, **community media** including **radio**, and **collateral** focusing on the metros of **GP**, **KZN**, and **WC**, and **9 districts** with the highest number of unvaccinated individuals.



SACC VACCINE LITERACY DIALOGUE, #VAXUMZANSI, CONNECTS WITH THE YOUTH MARKET



The #VaxuMzansi campaign gets underway at the Lutheran Church

Key to addressing vaccine hesitancy is understanding, communication and dialogue. **#VaxuMzansi** is a campaign launched by the SACC and Religious Forum Against COVID-19 (RFAC), and supported by the Solidarity Fund, that aims to use open dialogue to encourage the vaccination of up to **70%** of the religious population and the communities they serve. The campaign ran for a period of **4.5 months**, beginning in mid-August and concluding at the end of December **2021**. Through dialogue and engagement, congregations were encouraged to register for the **vaccine** and **receive** their jabs. With the majority of the congregants being young people - a segment that demonstrates higher than normal **vaccine-hesitancy** - this was an opportunity to address vaccine myths, fears and concerns through open, honest conversation.



TOP UP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY GRANT FUNDING FROM THE HCRF

In October 2021, the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) for non-profit organisations (NPOs) seeking support in implementing activities related to Food security, Health care, Economic recovery, Peace building, and Direct NPO support. This was in response to the ongoing need for support within civil society and the communities that had incurred losses and damage during the July 2021 unrest in Gauteng and KZN. The Fund had already allocated R50 million towards this programme. When the RFP closed on the 5th November 2021, however, it became clear that the value of applications received is considerably higher than the allocated amount. In total, the Fund approved 40 applications, to the value of over R82 million. Additional funding of R35 million is required, and has been approved, bringing the total allocation to R85 million. These additional funds will ensure wider reach and inclusivity.



EVEN MORE SMALL BUSINESSES TO BENEFIT FROM THE HCRF'S NEF TOP UP

After the civil unrest of July 2021, the Human Crisis Relief Fund and NEF collaborated to implement a humanitarian relief fund to assist in rebuilding the affected businesses. Announced in September 2021, a total of 238 applications have been received, to the value of R900 million. To date, a total of 76 applications valued at R556 million have been approved - with the NEF contributing R417 million in business loan contributions, and the Solidarity Fund contributing R139 million in grant funding. Further, the programme has saved 2 600 jobs.

There remains, however, a great need for the blended funding solution, where small businesses can benefit from both the **Solidarity Fund** grant and the **NEF loan**. To meet this need, the **Solidarity Fund** has approved a further **R80 million** in funding. The **R80 million** is split into **2 components**. **R60 million** is earmarked for the **grant funding** for **SMMEs** under the **NEF/SMME Business Support Program**. **R20 million** is earmarked for grant funding for the pharmacies under the **Independent Community Pharmacy Association** (**ICPA**) to support the pharmacies in operating optimally. From the partnership with **ICPA**, a total of **92 pharmacy businesses** have been identified within the provinces severely impacted by the riots and unrest.



The **Solidarity Fund** is committed to reporting responsibly and accurately to the **public** and **our stakeholders**. As such, the **Fund** publishes reports on a regular basis with updates on projects and initiatives undertaken. These are an essential part of demonstrating transparency and impact. The **Fund** is currently in the process of finalising additional reports for projects that have closed out.

To view reports on currently completed projects, please visit

view reports

The Solidarity Fund is committed to transparency around all of our activities. You can find detailed information and reporting around donations received, how we allocate resources as well as the impact created by visiting www.solidarityfund.co.za.

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