



MEDIA RELEASE

THE SOLIDARITY FUND ANNOUNCES ITS CLOSURE | 17 MARCH 2022

Johannesburg, 17 March 2022 – The Solidarity Fund, whose mandate was intently focused on rapid-response to the COVID-19 pandemic – will be wrapping up its operations with complete closure coming into effect at the end of September 2022 following a resolution taken by the Board in February.

The Fund was established with a very specific and limited mandate and was never intended to be a long-term solution, but rather an urgent, interim, impactful and significant intervention in augmenting government's response to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis.

The Fund believes that it has fulfilled its current mandate. Its funds are effectively fully allocated or disbursed and no further fundraising, active or passive, will take place. With immediate effect, the following will apply:

- No further fundraising and no new interventions or funding will be considered.
- Remaining funds are in process of being defined, allocated and aligned to the closure timeline of the Fund.
- The discipline and rigour on maintaining high impact, low-cost implementation will remain
- External audits for the 2022 and 2023 financial periods, together with Solidarity Fund Impact & Close Out Reports will follow.
- The bulk of the formal process to close the Fund will take place from this month through to July, and the final plans and processes will take place through August and September 2022.

COVID-19 remains a threat, and the need for non-pharmaceutical interventions and vaccination continues. However, the nature of the pandemic has changed, in large part, thanks to the vaccine roll-out. South Africa, and the world, are out of the crisis phase of COVID, and entering a stage where the approach to COVID needs to be normalised and managed alongside many diseases in society. Further, as the pandemic ebbs and flows and its impact on society has become more understood, the public and private healthcare sectors have evolved such that there is a much-reduced need for interventions such as ours.

The Fund has played its part in helping to capacitate the national and provincial healthcare system and believes that it stands ready to tackle any future waves. The world has reached

a point where organisations are realigning their response to COVID-19. It can be argued that we are entering a more 'endemic' than 'pandemic' response period.

Within the Fund there exists a wealth of learning and experience that must not be forgotten. And so, the business entity of the Fund will continue to exist in a state of dormancy, with the expectation that it can remobilise rapidly and effectively should another overwhelming national crisis happen again. This will be the Fund's legacy.

An update on the last 6 months

As of the 16th of March 2022, just under R3,8 billion in COVID relief funding has been received by the Fund, including VAT and interest, and just under R3,3 billion disbursed. All amounts received have been allocated, bar approximately R100 million which is just under 3% of total funds received. The proposed use thereof is in the process of being defined, allocated and aligned to the closure timeline of the Fund. The funds disbursed are made up of R2,3 billion disbursed under the Health Response Pillar, R429 million under Humanitarian Support and R458 million under Behaviour Change and Communications and R100 million transferred to the HCRF fund.

Following the July 2021 Unrest in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng last year, a further R497 million was donated to the Fund and R100m internal resources allocated for use in our fourth pillar, the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund (HCRF). Of this amount R573 million has been disbursed to date. The balance of the funds have been allocated to programmes, leaving R1 million available.

The National Government Vaccination Roll-out Programme remains a priority. The Fund has allocated R171 million to fund over 200 Government-run Outreach Sites which have administered 850 000 vaccinations to date across the 9 provinces.

Our national Essential Equipment programme has had a total allocation of R436 million. This equipment will outlast the pandemic and is part of the legacy of the Solidarity Fund.

The Eastern Cape Nurses Project was allocated R51 million in support of the Eastern Cape's Vaccine Roll-Out Outreach programme. The Gauteng Nurses project was allocated R23,5 million, and provided much needed support to hospitals during the 3rd wave and is available for subsequent waves.

The Fund is providing ongoing Technical Assistance to the NDoH through a co-funding contribution of R69m to DG Murray Trust (DGMT) to support the implementation of an effective nationwide COVID-19 vaccination programme.

The Solidarity Fund funded NDoH Covid-19 Vaccination Contact Centre has handled approximately 1,3 million calls to date.

The Fund's "#RollUpYourSleevesSA integrated demand creation campaign launched in September 2021 and reached over 23 million people on TV, over 25 million on radio, and 25 million via digital channels. The Fund also supported the NDoH's Vooma Vaccination Weekends.

Under the Humanitarian Pillar, the Fund approved a further R52,8 million for a third phase of the Solidarity Fund's Farming Inputs Voucher Programme with a further 25,000 subsistence farmers scheduled to receive once-off R2,000 vouchers .

The Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund (HCRF) partnered with the National Empowerment Fund, (NEF) to help rebuild local economic activity by supporting affected SMME's, saving approximately 4 000 jobs through a total allocation of R273 million.

39 Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) are in the process of receiving grant funding of R87million in support of activities related to Food security, Health care, Economic recovery and Peace building. A once-off R3,000 Digital Cash Voucher was approved for approximately 20 000 former employees and informal traders affected by the unrest. R62 million has been allocated towards this programme.

Tandi Nzimande, CEO of the Solidarity Fund, states "The Fund is unique in the world – bringing government, business and civil society together in a unified battle against a great threat. It stands as a global example for solidarity and impact delivery in a time of crisis. I know I speak for the whole Solidarity Fund team when I say it has been the privilege of a lifetime to serve our country in this manner."

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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