



NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP

Community Partners Impact Report

BENEFICIARY/IES	AMOUNT APPROVED	AMOUNT DISBURSED
<i>Covid Comms, Community Constituency Front (CCF) and South African Council of Churches (SACC)</i>	R 7 850 000	R 7 850 000

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.

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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). The NCP is made up of Covid Comms, Community Constituency Front (CCF) and South African Council of Churches (SACC).



COVID COMMS

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ABOUT COVID COMMS

COVID Comms was formed soon after announcing of the national COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020 to provide helpful information about the pandemic to people living in South Africa.

The core principles are to produce credible information products – infographics, videos, and sound files – in understandable, local languages, easily accessible on digital platforms. We emphasise using local languages and translating as many of our information products as possible.

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MANDATE

COVID Comms' mandate was to produce free and easily accessible content explaining COVID-19 principles in plain and multiple local languages.

Further, COVID Comms was challenged to expand distribution beyond existing channels and collaborate with more community-based organisations to provide information and resources regarding the pandemic.

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DELIVERABLES

- **19 x Print content pieces** (translated ten times): For workshops and partner organisations distribution. Also, many of these were placed on AD reach poles.
- **44 x Digital infographics** (translated ten times): For distribution on social media, WhatsApp and our partner organisations.
- **11 x Animated PSA's** (translated ten times): For distribution on television (Cape TV), digital boards, social media, WhatsApp and our partner organisations.
- **5 x Live-Action PSA's** (no translations): For distribution on television (Cape TV), digital boards, social media, WhatsApp and our partner organisations.

- **5 x Radio PSA's** (translated ten times): For distribution on the radio (702 and community radio stations via DATT), social media, WhatsApp and our partner organisations.
- **1 x Toolkit to be used by on the ground vaccine advocates/activists** (translated ten times): Used in 100 workshops but also used by some partner organisations
- **61 x Vaccines diary videos/radio PSA's:** For distribution on the radio (community radio stations via DATT), social media, WhatsApp and our partner organisations.
- **98 x Workshops:** 10 to 20 attendees on average, with some workshops with as many as 100 attendees. Workshops allowed for qualitative conversations answering questions about COVID-19 and vaccination. Attendees created vaccine diaries, and attendees were assisted with vaccination.

DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19 OR NOT TESTED YET BUT SUSPECT COVID-19?

SELF-ISOLATE IN 7 EASY STEPS

1. Stay at home for 10 days
2. Stay in a room separate from other people if possible
3. Avoid sharing items with other people at home if possible
4. Wear a mask when around others even when you are at home
5. Clean your hands and surfaces around you with soap and water
6. Cough into your elbow or a tissue you can throw away
7. Tell family and friends about your symptoms often



PROTECT YOURSELF. PROTECT OTHERS.





O filwe Pfizer? Fiwa booster!

- Fa go setse go fetile dikgwedi tse thataro o entilwe ka moento wa gago wa bobedi wa Pfizer, o ka tihabiwa booster ya COVID-19.
- Dibooster di tsosolosa tshireletso ya gago kgalihanong le COVID-19. Se se go thusa go lwantsha mefuta e mencha jaaka Omicron.
- Di ka go thusa thata fa o na le malwetsi kgotsa matshosetsi a pholo.
- O ka tihabiwa booster kwa lefelong lefe kana lefe le go entiwang kwa go lone – dira dithulaganyo, kgotsa o itsenne fela.

Oketsa tshireletso ya gago kgalihanong le tshwaetso e e masisi le go robadiwa kwa

<https://covidcomms.org.za/#vaccination-site>




VHO THAVHIWA NGA J&J NAA? KHA VHA WANE MUSHONGA WA U KHWATSHISA MASWOLE A MUVHILI!!

- Arali vho no fhedza meduwa a mahumi matanu na lithihi kana minweda mivhili vho thavhiwa nga J&J, ndi tshifhinga tsha u wana mushonga wa u khwatshisa maswole a muvhili u vha tsireledza kha Covid-19
- U wana mushonga wa u khwatshisa maswole a muvhili zwi engedza tsireledzo kha vhuwadze ha Covid-19. Izwi zwi vha thusa uri vha lwe na tshivhumbeco tshiswa tsha tshithili sa Omicron
- Zwi nga thusa nga maanda arali vha na manwe malwadze aane a khou vha tambudza
- Vha nga wana mushonga wa u khwatshisa maswole a muvhili yavho fhethu humwe na humwe hune ha haeliwa hone - kha vha vha tshudze uri vho do swika kana vha sokou ya vha songo amba, vha do thuswa.

Kha vha engedze tsireledzo yavho kha u kavhiwa na u vaelwa vhuongeloni musi vho wana mushonga wa u khwatshisa maswole a muvhili

<https://covidcomms.org.za/#vaccination-site>



The President Speaks – 29 November 2021

WE ARE PLANNING FOR THE 4TH WAVE

- Increasing hospital beds
- Increasing contact tracing and screening
- Increasing oxygen supply in hospitals
- Making sure the WHO travel guidelines are followed

WASH HANDS
KEEP A DISTANCE
WEAR YOUR MASK OPEN WINDOWS





REACH AND IMPACT

Social Media Reach

Social media performed on par with phase 1, with the engagement rates aligning closely with the societal interest in COVID-19 and vaccination numbers. Engagement numbers specifically dropped towards the end of December as vaccination rates plummeted and did not fully recover in the new year. As of February, metrics have returned to about 50% of pre-December levels.

Twitter:

Tweets:	262
Followers:	3 077
Impressions:	374 700
Engagements:	1 900
Engagement Rate:	1,3%

Twitter continues to be the premier distribution platform during this phase, with high engagement. Engagement does change based on other activities, whether on the ground, radio or television.

Facebook:

Posts:	117
Followers:	3 958
Reach: (POPIA changes have reduced this)	14 083
Engagement:	526

During this phase, distribution on Facebook was continued with content already optimised, which performed well. Reach appears lower due to the implementation of the POPIA rules by Meta.

Instagram:

Posts:	127
Followers:	137
Reach: (POPIA changes have reduced this)	2 489
Engagements:	247

During this phase, distribution on Instagram was formalised. However, as with Facebook, reach appears far lower due to the implementation of the POPIA rules by Meta. On this platform, the content will be further optimised for Instagram.

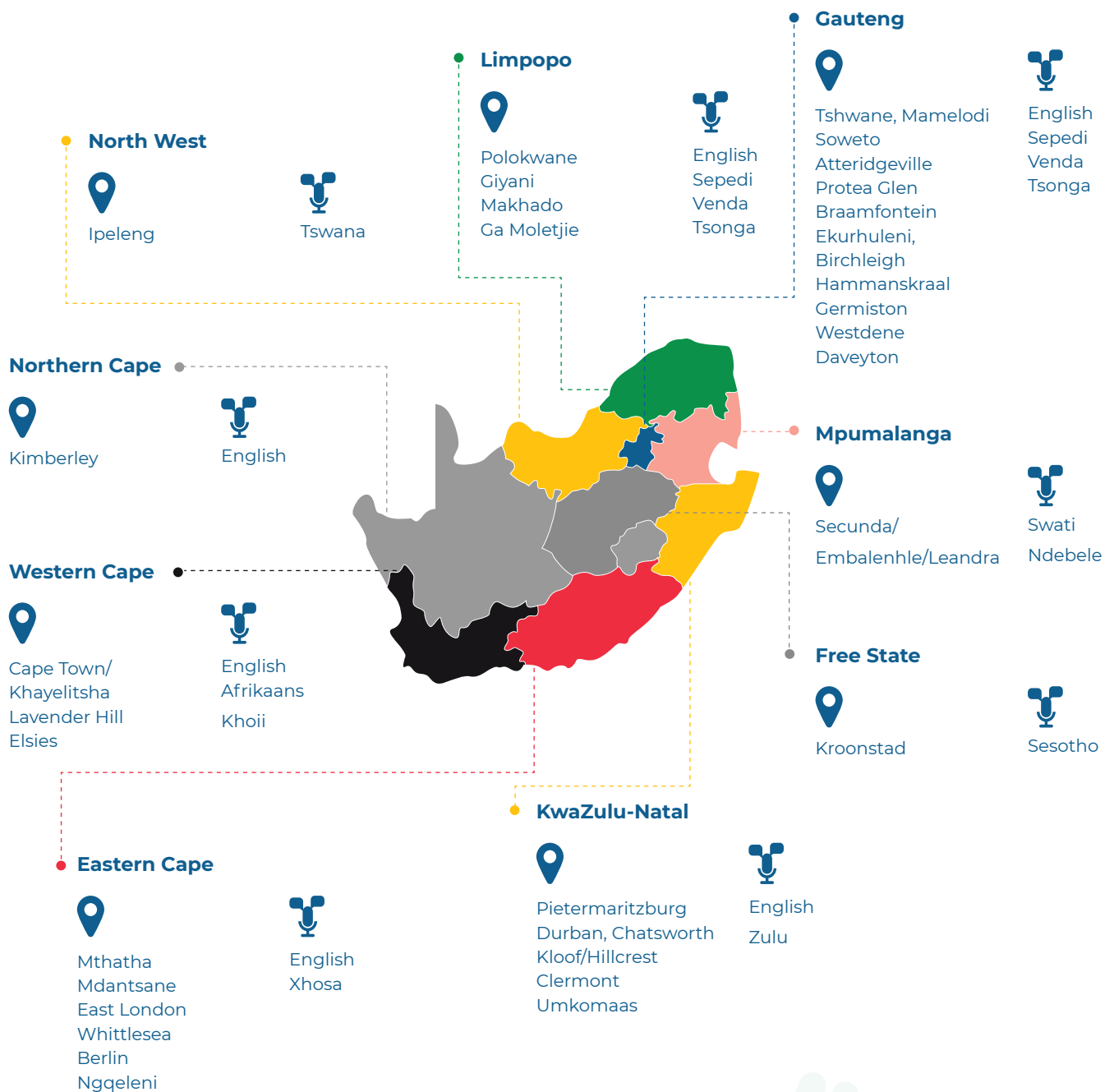
Reddit and Tik Tok:

Reddit Posts:	7
Tik Tok Posts:	20
Reddit AMA Questions Answered:	21
South African Sub Reddit community size:	160 000+
Tik Tok video views:	3406

In partnership with the mod team, Reddit and Tik Tok were new platforms in this phase. Reddit (on the South African Subreddit, pinning and highlighting content for their 160 000+ users) launched in December. Tik Tok launched in January. The experimentation phase is still ongoing with both these platforms.



Workshop geographic and language reach



The workshop programme was primarily designed to create opportunities to produce vaccine diaries for this phase of work. However, what became apparent very quickly, was that the process was in and of itself incredibly valuable, with good feedback from attendees and with, on many occasions, attendance and engagement being above expected rates. More than 1 700 people attended these workshops.

Ad Reach campaign

COVID Comms partnered with Ad Reach during this phase to place several content pieces at no rental cost on their street poles. In this campaign, 203 Ad Reach sites were placed across the metros. COVID Comms had to cover the cost of printing and rigging, while Ad Reach sponsored the rental costs for three to six months (dependant on the site).

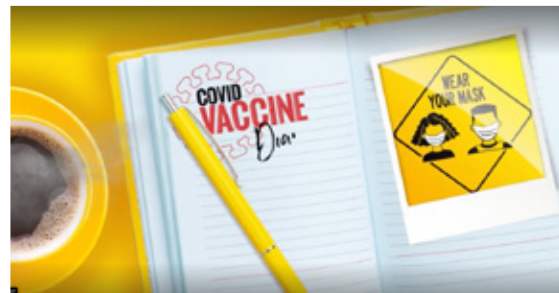


DPSA campaign

COVID Comms partnered with the DPSA to produce the content for their public servant vaccination campaign. This entailed producing three animated videos, three radio ads and several print and digital static ads.

DPSA provided the ad expenditure in this campaign, including:

- 290 x TV Spots (SABC)
- 292 x Radio Spots (SABC and Community) (all languages)
- Caxton print coverage for March





Cape TV, 702 and community radio stations

With these three distribution platforms, we provided the partners with content. In the case of Cape TV, all the video content we produced, 702, all the radio content we produced, and with the community radio stations, we provided vaccine diaries to the Demand Acceleration Task Team for radio distribution.

These distributors have not provided financial value or metrics of what was placed.

WhatsApp and direct communication

Over this period, we continued to post content to WhatsApp. As previously outlined, it is difficult to track the ultimate impact of WhatsApp distribution. Over this phase, we distributed to 16 WhatsApp groups, with about 2 400 recipients. There is a very high potential reach of this content. When it is delivered to other organisations, they have committed to distributing it to other organisations, but as said previously, this is difficult to track.

Mural project

Before communities headed home for their December breaks, COVID Comms produced 36 murals at six high traffic taxi ranks (six each).

These locations were:

- Baragwanath Taxi Rank, Soweto
- Orange Farm
- Palm Springs, Vaal
- Randfontein
- Pretoria
- Rustenburg CBD Taxi Rank

These murals remained in place for one month but were not removed at the end of the agreement period unless another purchaser had used the place.





SACC partnership

COVID Comms collaborated with the South African Council of Churches to produce and translate the content of 148 000 flyers distributed in February. These flyers were based on the content already produced, but optimised for print formats, and co-branded as part of the collaboration.

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KEY CHALLENGES

During this round of funding, there were three significant challenges. First, in consultation with partner organisations to produce the vaccine diaries, we found out that community members, in general, were not well informed about COVID-19 and the vaccine, even when they had access to content.

To address this, we switched tactics. Instead of using our vaccine diary budget purely on production, we used the opportunity to run workshops, primarily aimed at the youth, that was first educated and informed and then allowed for a two-way discussion answering any questions or concerns.

While the vaccine diaries were not as diverse (geographically) as we first envisaged, we still reached 12 language groups in South Africa, and the content remained diverse. Beyond this, we discovered the workshops themselves were incredibly valuable, making them the centrepiece of our next phase of work.

Upscaling to meet the production demands of a three-month instead of a six-month programme, particularly while expanding the mobilisation capabilities, was challenging. While we did manage to produce and distribute the content needed, some of it arrived late. To address this, we expanded our team and capability, and for mobilisation, we partnered with another organisation (Youth Lab). The most significant learning from this was identifying bottlenecks earlier in the process and expanding to address them.

The final challenge was advertising sponsors. Much of the free airtime we received in phase 1 was limited for a year; it was not available for our second phase of work. To work around this, we worked with new partners (such as DATT, Cape Town TV & 702), and we embarked on a fundraising programme for above the line expenditure. While we got significant value add promises from broadcasters, we discovered it was low on the corporate interest. In particular, we noted that corporate interest was far lower towards the end of 2021 than during the beginning and middle of the year. The primary adjustment here is to measure our expectations and further prioritise other lower-cost forms of distribution.

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CONCLUSION

Once again, we were able to deliver and distribute more than originally scoped while remaining within our budget, utilising any savings to produce and distribute further.

The biggest takeaway was expanded distribution and an extensive workshop campaign. The feedback we received from these workshops, in terms of vaccinations afterwards and community engagement, exceeded expectations.

The workshops were a strong proof of concept, which we are expanding on and intend to implement on a larger scale going forward.



COMMUNITY CONSTITUENCY FRONT

BENEFICIARY	AMOUNT APPROVED	AMOUNT DISBURSED
Community Constituency Front (CCF)	R 3 000 000	R 3 000 000

01

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY CONSTITUENCY FRONT (CCF)

The Community Constituency Front was established and is led by SANAC Civil Society Forum (CSF) and the NEDLAC Community Trust. It is a registered not-for-profit organisation (NPC) incorporated in 2020 in response to COVID-19. CCF is led and governed by a five-member activist board of directors, made up of representatives from the leadership of the CCF serving in NEDLAC.

The leadership of the CCF in NEDLAC provides policy and strategic direction to the board of directors of the CCF. The CCF is co-chaired by Steve Letsike (from CSF) and Thulani Tshefuta (overall convener of the NEDLAC Community Constituency). The Community Constituency COVID-19 Front is a front that facilitates the participation of civil society sectors and networks and their constituent member organisations in the national response and implementation of community-based measures in response to COVID-19.

The CCF represents a broad voice of civil society formations comprised of over 10 000 NPCs, tribal councils, faith-based organisations, co-operatives, and civic organisations represented by apex civil society networks. Of these, 3 821 have been verified in the Fund's database.

CCF has appointed and delegated the 'Show Me Your Number' HIV prevention project (SMYN) as the managing organisation and contracting party on its behalf for mobilising and managing funds for implementation. SMYN has been appointed because it is a constituent and compliant organisation (in terms of due diligence) that forms part of the SANAC CSF network. Furthermore, its executive director, Mabalane Mfundisi, has been appointed as the volunteer Convener of the CCF. Therefore, the contracting on behalf of CCF occur through SMYN with any would-be funder.

PROJECT MANDATE

The Solidarity Fund tasked CCF to increase uptake of vaccinations through demand generation and social mobilisation using the following:

- Dissemination of messaging about the uptake of COVID-19 in line with national messages from the National Department of Health (NDoH).
- Social mobilisation and demand generation that targets the whole of society, especially men, to take up vaccination.
- Attending planning meetings at district and local levels, providing feedback on work done on the ground.
- Strengthening the Fund's participation in the coordination through linking Neighbourhood Agents (NBAs) and leaders to be part of the district, local and ward coordination structures.
- Leveraging the National Communication Partnership (NCP) and civil society network.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES



Social mobilisation and demand creation: Through the direct engagements undertaken by the Neighbourhood Agents (NBAs), we have educated and made over 120 000 South Africans understand why it is essential to vaccinate, and of these, we have mobilised directly over 10 000 to convert their intent to vaccinate into actual vaccination. Social mobilisation and demand creation involve deploying the NBAs across all identified priority districts and allocating duties to them to transport information on Covid-19, which is gathered through engagement with relevant stakeholders, networks, and partners. This process is done to build factual evidence on the validity of the vaccine, address local, district and national myths and provide a referral to people on the ground as to how and where they can get vaccinated.



Raise awareness through leaders as ambassadors: The Fund participated and advocated for a community-based response to COVID-19 through the voice of the CCF leaders at national platforms (NEDLAC, NRRTT, NRRTT engagements with NATJOINTS, RCCE, Social Listening, DATT and NCP) as well as at provincial, district and local levels working with other partners including government, business and labour for joint approaches to ensure maximum impact. It is about civil society leaders speaking truth to power and being active voices of change at the community level. Knowledge gained by the leaders who participate at the national, provincial, district and local partnership level and communication about increasing vaccine uptake and dealing with hesitancy and myths is thrown around at social meetings/gatherings and on social media platforms.



Media and communications: The Fund has strategically used social media platforms, online radio platforms and community radio slots organised by GCIS and the partnership with the Daily Sun to amplify the social mobilisation efforts. The Fund's media and communications efforts have enabled a reach of over five million people through various media platforms. The approach towards communication and public awareness through social mobilisation, campaigns, and media platforms are crucial for communities to be empowered with the scientific and medical facts around the virus, how it is spread, and the social and behavioural dimensions.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES



Demand creation and social mobilisation: The Fund has deployed 12 team leaders and 78 NBAs to drive demand generation through social mobilisation. The Fund reached over 120 000 people through social mobilisation and demand creation.



Training: Training was conducted for the NBAs, team leaders and leaders as ambassadors to be confident ambassadors of the CCF cause.



Coordination and directing implementation: The coordinating team made of the SMYN team, led by its executive director, project coordinator, community engagement manager, media and communications coordinator, and others, provided day-to-day leadership of the CCF for maximum results. The team made actual arguments on the vaccine's validity at local, district and national meetings and platforms to address myths and do referrals as to where and how people can vaccinate.



Media and communications: The Fund's media products and messages complement the core work of social mobilisation and demand creation. This approach is based on the fact that the Fund decided to have media and communication as tools to raise awareness and accelerate demand creation for vaccines while responding to the myths or incorrect information shared on social media by individuals who are anti-vaccination (Anti-Vaxxers).



Leaders as ambassadors: To speak truth to power with authority, our leaders engaged in various platforms to clearly articulate what comes from the ground where communities operate. The Fund's leaders' occupation of these platforms occurred at national, provincial, districts, and local. Further to advocating, the CCF leaders were engaged in fostering partnerships and communicating about increasing vaccine uptake and dealing with hesitancy and myths voiced at social meetings/gatherings.



Activations: Activations the Fund conducted to engage and mobilise people to vaccinate. The Fund used the activations to gather social listening data on why people do not vaccinate and help people get their vaccinations.



Campaigns: The Fund created, launched, and implemented the 'Vaccination4Men' campaign to enhance demand generation and social mobilisation that was elevated and promoted through various media platforms like social media, community radio, television, print to ensure presence in the mind and talkability. Furthermore, the Fund pulled resources to support other campaigns like the 'Vooma Vaccination Weekend' campaigns led by the government.

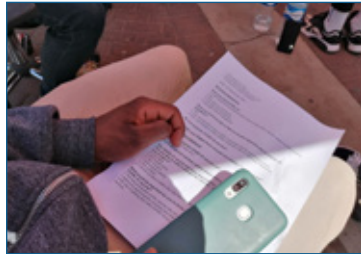


Vaccine drives: We conducted vaccination drives linked with our activations, social mobilisation, and demand generation efforts. These vaccination drives were supported by the services of a volunteer professional nurse, Lucy Letsike, who linked us up with vaccination service providers from government, NGOs, and private sector role players. This ensured that vaccination service providers' availability met our social mobilisation and demand generation to convert intent into actual vaccination.



Participating in various meetings at district, provincial and national level: Our voice based on our experiences and technical expertise enabled us to meaningfully and effectively participate in national communication partners, NEDLAC NRRT, NRRTT engagements with NATJOINTS, NCP, DATT, RCCE TWG and RCCE social listening sessions. We further engaged in the internal processes that ensured we provided regular feedback to our network through bi-weekly meetings. The Fund also participated in various webinars to contribute, learn, and share about COVID-19.





PROJECT IMPACT AND REACH

Media and communications impact

We used the following platforms daily and weekly to amplify national messages based on the guidance of the DATT, NCP and RCCE as follows:

- Produced and presented a weekly online radio show (#ThinkTwiceAboutCOVID-19), interviewing various guests invited and integrating the online radio with YouTube and Facebook as delivery platforms. **Seven shows were broadcasted, and the estimated reach was over 3 500 listeners cumulatively through these platforms.**
- Through the partnership with the Daily Sun, we had a weekly story in the form of a profile, published in the Daily Sun as a hard copy and in digital format on their online platforms. A total of 22 articles were published. **Estimate to have reached over 2,4 million readers cumulatively through this platform.**
- We had a weekly Radio Khwezi (a community radio station) interview on COVID-19 messaging. **Twelve interviews were conducted, and the estimated reach was over 148 200 listeners cumulatively per month through the radio station.**
- We were interviewed on various community radio stations at the request of GCIS to support messaging linked to the various Vooma Vaccination Weekend waves. We participated in 21 different community radio stations, and 28 interviews were conducted in total. **Estimate to have reached over 1 237 500 listeners through these 21 radio stations.**
- Daily distribution of messages on social media platforms. Over the reporting period, we distributed 215 messages via Twitter, 138 via Facebook, 151 via Instagram and seven via Tik-Tok. **Estimate to have reached over 5 000 followers through the various platforms utilised and reached just over 125 000 audiences through these platforms.**
- Daily distribution of messaging through WhatsApp for the leadership network. **WhatsApp cumulatively reached about 200 leaders per month.**
- Bi-weekly information dissemination to the leaders through Zoom briefing sessions. **Twelve briefings took place, reaching an average of 45 leaders in attendance bi-weekly.**
- Through the support from Solidarity Fund's media agency, Joe Public, we managed to launch a 'Vaccination4Men' Roundtable – addressing the concerns that men have about getting the vaccine across various sectors. We hosted four social listening sessions across multiple sectors and communities in three different provinces and five districts. **An event was broadcasted on Newzroom Afrika with 872 537 viewership and published on the Citizen Newspaper with an estimated readership of 219 000.**

Social mobilisation and demand creation impact

The CCF used various social mobilisation and demand creation approaches that resulted in the following impact:

- The CCF engaged a team of 12 team leaders who supervised and supported 88 NBAs working in the following eight provinces; Gauteng, North West, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Western Cape, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape, and in 12 districts/metros. Through these team leaders and NBAs, we conducted just over 70 activations which resulted in the following impact being realised:
 - People mobilised to undergo vaccinations – **115 000**
 - People who vaccinated and were recorded at the vaccination sites – **12 000** (10% success rate)
 - People rallied and vaccinated, but not recorded at the vaccination sites – **13 000**

- CCF played an active role in the Vooma Vaccination Weekend (October 2021) and Vooma Vaccination Week (November 2021). Through our efforts, the following was achieved:
 - People mobilised to participate in the Vooma drives – **6 500**
 - People who vaccinated and were recorded at the vaccination sites – **2 300**
 - People rallied and vaccinated, but not recorded at the vaccination sites – **4 200**
- The CCF conceptualised, launched and implemented the ‘Vaccination4Men’ Campaign approved by the NCP, RCCE, DATT and MAC on SBC in November 2021, linked to the celebration of International Men’s Day. The following milestones were achieved:
 - Ten stakeholder organisations endorsed and agreed to carry the objectives of ‘Vaccination4Men’: Show Me Your Number/ Ubuntu Initiative Project, Arts and Culture Sector, NUM, SAYC, AC2, Qina Mshayeli, NUPPATHSTA, CONTRALESA, Religious Forum Against COVID-19/ SACC, SAFFPU, Takuwani Riime Men’s Movement/ AZALI – all the organisations participated in the media launch that took place on 6 November 2021.
 - The launch was covered on various media platforms, including SAfm and live on TV (Newz Room Africa) and social media platforms. The estimated media coverage reach was 1,5 million people based on Newz Room Africa, SAfm and the use of other media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

Leaders as ambassadors

A critical strategic lever of our engagement was about using leaders as ambassadors, which had the following impact:

- Leaders as ambassadors was a key achievement. Through this mechanism, we participated and advocated for a community-based response to COVID-19 through the voice of the CCF leaders at national platforms that included the following:
 - Attending and contributing to the bi-weekly meetings of NEDLAC that included NRRTT, NRRTT engagements with NATJOINTS.
 - Attending the weekly RCCE TWG meetings and RCCE Social Listening meetings. We participated in drafting the weekly RCCE Social Listening Report.
 - Briefings of the DATT, including the deployment of two people to assist the DATT in carrying out its work (Pauline Maketa and Noko Mashilo) were deployed from the CCF to assist the DATT with its functions.
 - Attending the weekly NCP meetings. These meetings were preceded by the Civil Society War Room meetings, where we presented our weekly progress report and consolidated the weekly Civil Society Report presented at the NCP.
 - Engaging and participating in the provincial, district and local levels working groups and the on-demand generation working with other partners like government, business and labour for joint approaches that ensure maximum impact.



CHALLENGES

- There was a need to equip our team with the necessary information to engage with people on the ground. Even though we provided training, there were areas where trained NBAs and team leaders were unsure of the ever-changing and evolving stages of COVID-19, both in terms of scientific discoveries and changes to the regulations linked to the various iterations of the Disaster Management Act.
We had to keep the knowledge dissemination ongoing through regular updates as a mitigating measure.
- The efforts to mobilise were hampered by the request of letters by the NDOH officials, who felt that they were not informed even though our efforts were meant to assist them and the country to reach the required percentage of people vaccinated.
We had to lobby and constantly remind colleagues that protocol should not stand in the way of providing services that the government desperately needs to serve the South African society. Where possible, we wrote the required letters. In some areas, the letters were adequate, and the people were mobilised. In others, the letters got rejected, and the people were unfortunately turned away and not serviced.
- Men remained a big concern because of the low numbers of vaccinating. They were hesitant to vaccine due to numerous reasons such as being infertile, scared of needles, and questions about rumours they heard regarding the COVID-19 vaccines.
CCF conceptualised, launched, and implemented a campaign called 'Vaccination4Men' so that we can hear these men's views address them so that we win them over. The campaign was extended to other stakeholders working with men so that they could use their influence to engage other men in their networks. Through this CCF effort and efforts from different quarters and role players, we have seen that men are starting to vaccinate lately. The most significant concern is now young men who remain behind in terms of the numbers of those vaccinated, and we will be pivoting to this group of young men and addressing their hesitancy.

LESSONS LEARNT

- When dealing with the community, be open-minded. Social listening sessions were critical for us to listen and reshape our approach.
- When deploying people to work at the community level, empower them with the necessary information, tools and strategies and always ensure you update their knowledge. However, you need to learn from their lived experiences to refine the programme design further.
- Quality is better than quantity. Gathering a small pool of people and empowering them with excellent and informative news is better than using mass media, hoping that you will reach many people.
- Speaking in a language that people understand makes it easier for them to listen.
- Leaders can serve as a good alliance in quest of curbing societal-ills.
- Media platforms are an effective tool to validate the information for the people on the ground.
- Working together with stakeholders is the best way to get things done.
- Government needs to be part of the discussion, engaging and strategising. It will ensure that no bureaucratic red tape hinders the process when external stakeholders start implementing.

SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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BENEFICIARY	AMOUNT APPROVED	AMOUNT DISBURSED
SACC – Religious forum against COVID-19	R 2 000 000	R 2 000 000

01

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Solidarity Fund (SF) has developed a Behaviour Change Communication campaign, currently in its third phase. The three main objectives of this campaign are to build social solidarity and cohesion, increase prevention behaviour and increase vaccine literacy and knowledge among all South Africans. In response to this, the Religious Forum Against COVID-19 was formed in collaboration with different religious organisations and faith leaders.

In the past two years, religious groups have witnessed the fall of thousands of members and religious leaders due to COVID-19. There is a desperate need to fight for the people within the religious sector and help protect them from the virus. #VaxuMzansi is a campaign by the Religious Forum Against COVID-19 that aims to encourage vaccination, with a target of up to 70% within the faith congregations and communities they serve.

02

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Created the Religious Forum Against COVID-19:
 - Launched the webinar 'Faith Meets Science', with media in attendance.
 - Hosted a national prayer day on SABC 2 that aired to an average of **18 million** viewers.
 - Launched the #VaxuMzansi campaign across the country that included a national vaccine day.
 - Coordinated in person and virtual vaccine literacy training for **399** religious leaders.

2. Created COVID-19 social media content:
 - **290** x Posters
 - **62** x Videos
 - **253 024** x People reached
 - **19 352** x Engagements

3. Shared recordings of faith leaders promoting vaccine uptake, #VaxuMzansi campaign and the importance of using NPI's on faith-based radio stations. Furthermore, conducted **60** interviews with faith leaders to increase the religious community's voice in their support of vaccination and the fight against COVID-19.

4. In collaboration with COVID COMMS, produced, printed and distributed **148 000** IEC flyers, which was translated into the **11** official languages.

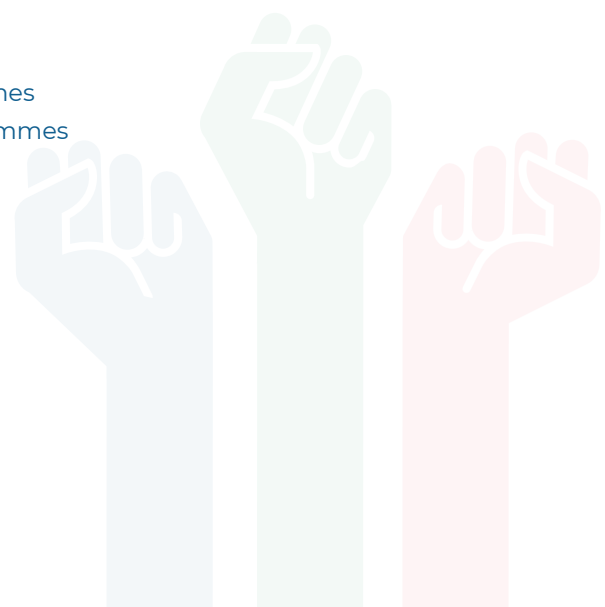
03

REACH

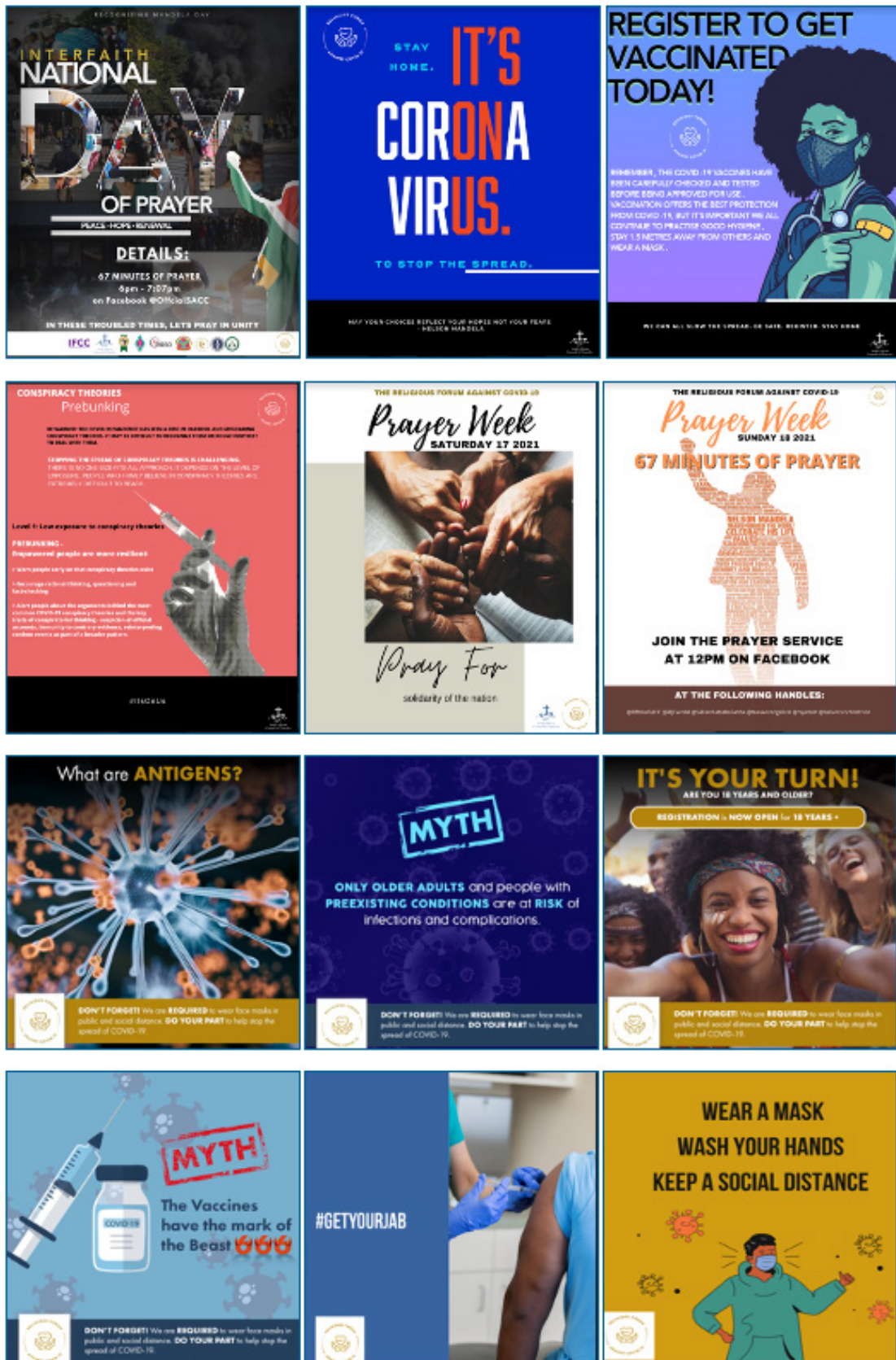
The RFAC communication processes used in realising the objectives of the campaign was producing, distributing, and disseminating digital educational content regarding COVID-19 and promoting the vaccine. The content was distributed on existing communication platforms of the religious groups, with WhatsApp being the most common platform. Facebook and Twitter were the most used social media platforms. The content was also promoted on the Religious Forum Against COVID-19 microsite and social media pages.

To date, the Religious Forum Against COVID-19 has been able to engage the public through the following content:

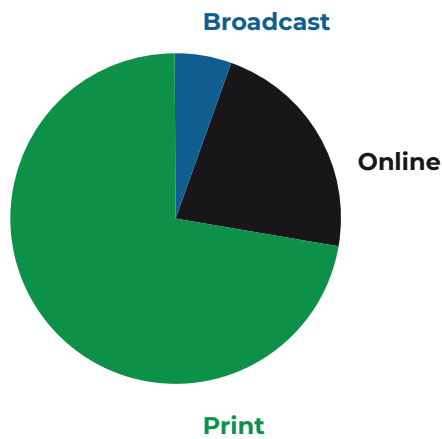
- **200+** x Digital and printable infographics
- **148 000** x IEC flyers
- **62** x COVID-19 and vaccine promotional videos
- **4** x Public service announcements
- **27** x Audio segments for radio
- **50+** x Radio interviews
- **6** x Newsletters
- **3** x Blog articles
- **4** x Dedicated COVID-19 webpages
- **3** x Billboards
- **22** x Media features
- **8 128** x Promotional vaccine masks
- **1** x National prayer day service on SABC 2
- **1** x National vaccine day launch
- **1** x Webinar of '*Faith Meets Science*'
- **3** x Virtual vaccine literacy training programmes
- **73** x Physical vaccine literacy training programmes



Communication pieces:



Media reach:



Broadcast:

- Lekoa FM
- Umhlobo Wenene FM
- SABC News
- Cape Pulpit
- Energy FM
- Fine Music Radio
- Channel Africa
- 94.5 KFM
- Newzroom Afrika
- Talk Radio 702
- Ukhozi FM
- eNews Channel Africa

Print and online:

- The Independent on Saturday – Insider
- Saturday Star – Insider
- Pretoria News
- The Mercury
- The Sunday Times
- Vuk’uzenzele
- Independent Online (IOL)
- News Portal
- News24
- Daily Maverick

04

IMPACT



Table 1: Digital platform impact


Digital Platform	Total Number of Posters	Total Number of Videos	Total Reach	Total Engagement
SACC Facebook	63	19		
SACC Twitter	22	2	198 031	7 572
Newsletter	6			
Jamiatul Ulama SA Facebook	3	3		
Jamiatul Ulama SA Twitter			2 445	84
Newsletter	6			
The Evangelical Alliance of SA Facebook	17	4		
The Evangelical Alliance of SA Twitter	17	4	133	67
Newsletter	6			
Believers in Christ Facebook	3	1	191	126
Believers in Christ Twitter				
RFAC Facebook Page			20 216	5 000
RFAC Instagram Page	52	8	7 771	54
South African Hindu Maha Sabha Facebook	29	6		
South African Hindu Maha Sabha Twitter	29	6	24 237	3 256
Newsletter	6			
Total	259	53	253 024	16 159


- 16 x Physical ‘train-the-trainer’ sessions (with 329 national and local faith leaders trained)
- 3 x Virtual vaccine literacy sessions (with 85 national and local faith leaders)
- 399 x Religious leaders trained in total
- **Link:** <https://bit.ly/30mD5Z3>



Table 2: #VaxuMzansi impact:

	Western Cape	KwaZulu-Natal	Eastern Cape	Mpumalanga
Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation workshops/dialogues • 4 x Church engagement meetings • 5 x Dialogues • 1 x Vaccination drive • 4 x Door-to-door mobilisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x #VaxuMzansi presentations • 8 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation workshops/dialogues • 9 x Church engagement meetings • 4 x Vaccine drives • 5 x Door-to-door mobilisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation workshops/dialogues • 4 x Church engagement meetings • 4 x Vaccine drives • 6 x Vaccine literacy and training sessions • 4 x Door-to-door mobilisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 x Church engagement meetings • 13 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation training sessions • 6 x Vaccine drives • 5 x Dialogues • 6 x Door-to-door mobilisations
Coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Cape Town • Hermanus • Khayelitsha • Mitchells Plain • Rocklands • Westridge • Eastridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amajuba • Newcastle • eThekwin • Zululand • Vryheid • Nongoma • Ulundi • Ladysmith • uMgungundlovu • Mooi River • Pietermaritzburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Baartman • Port Alfred • OR Tambo • Nelson Mandela Bay • Amathole • Joe Gqabi • Alfred Nzo • Buffalo City Metro • Chris Hani District • Mzimvubu • Lusikisiki • Mount Ayliff • Patterson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ehlanzeni • Mkhondo • Umjindi • Kanyamazane • Gert Sibande • Amsterdam • Piet Retief
Total number of people reached through these interventions	782	1 468	9 190	352

	Gauteng	Limpopo	Northern Cape	Free State
Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation workshops • 2 x Dialogues • 3 x Church engagement meetings • 3 x Vaccine drives • 3 x Door-to-door mobilisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Church engagement meeting • 2 x Vaccine drives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 x Presentations • 6 x Door-to-door awareness/mobilisations • 4 x Community dialogues • 10 x Church engagement meetings • 12 x Vaccination drives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation workshops

	Gauteng	Limpopo	Northern Cape	Free State
Coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedibeng • West Rand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giyani • Polokwane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kimberley • Ritchie • Delportshoop • Dikgatlong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phuthaditjhaba • Tebang
Total number of people reached through these interventions	2 561	163	1 126	51

	North West
Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 x Church engagement meetings • 3 x Vaccine literacy and mobilisation training sessions • 2 x Vaccine drives
Coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tlhabane • Matlosana • Vryburg • Makapanstad
Total number of people reached through these interventions	899

Media articles:

Etv News and Sport
2021-09-24 13:07:34

24 Sep 2021 @ 13h00 - Religious Forum Against COVID



Religious leaders step up for the jab



UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa, Nontso Belale Thomas and other health department officials during the UNICEF and SA Health department partners Pfizer and Shantha Biotech's in-roads visit to promote screening and vaccinating for Covid-19. Picture: Supplied

VaxuMzansi campaign takes health care to residents in the fight against Covid-19 in hotspot areas



05

KEY CHALLENGES

Not all organisations have full-time staff who can carry out the communication work and provide feedback timeously; it delays collating all the data. The Fund worked with the various teams to get volunteers on board that could focus on the communications work on a part-time basis.

Organisations have different rules and processes regarding their social media posting and use of logos. This caused a delay and sometimes non-participation on some posts. The Fund developed a solution based on tailoring communication methods to each group and creating the forum’s microsite and social media pages. The Fund could also share the content posted with the various faith groups by tagging their pages.

Faith leaders who were pro-vaxxers were hesitant to engage with anti-vaxxers due to a lack of information on conspiracy theories. The Fund created information notes for faith leaders to educate themselves and be able to respond to myths, especially during media engagements.

Vaccine persuasions were beyond posting digital content and required dialogue. It guided the launch of #VaxuMzansi, an on the ground vaccine campaign with provincial vaccine teams who are vaccine literate and able to engage with faith leaders and communities regarding vaccine concerns.

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CONCLUSION

Since embarking on the #VaxuMzansi campaign, the Fund learnt that enabling community dialogue allows for more engagement and vigour surrounding the vaccine. It helps create understanding and awareness of the importance of getting vaccinated. By maintaining the support of the various faith leaders, the vaccine communication efforts were more impactful. The interfaith group has a keen interest in learning more about the vaccine and going to vaccine sites to get vaccinated.