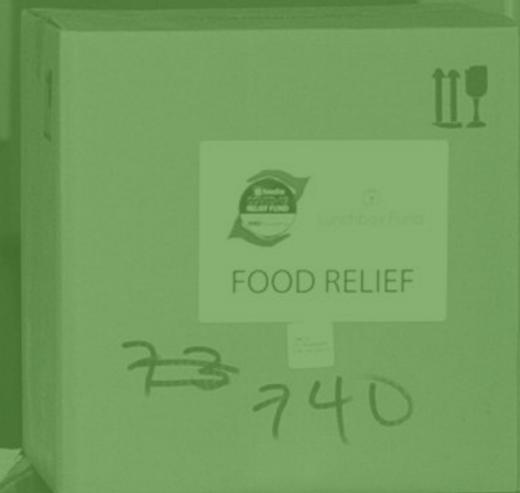




WELFARE

IMPACT REPORT 2020

by Jane Kanswe, Welfare Manager





OVERVIEW

COVID-19 dramatic spread has disrupted lives, livelihoods, communities, economy and placed additional strain on poor households. The majority of the people have been left to fend for themselves in these very difficult and uncertain times. In response to this, the welfare programme developed a whole new approach to operating. While still adhering to National Disaster Regulations and social distancing rules, as implemented by the South African government, the welfare team have conducted over 8000 rapid assessments since lockdown started. The BackaBuddy campaign was such a great initiative for raising funds that went towards assisting our clients during the past year.

While working remotely, the welfare programme established a Welfare Hotline and a WhatsApp platform to ensure ease and accessibility for clients during this time. Working under the COVID-19 pandemic brought with it many learnings. Initially the programme was challenged to find new ways and methods of work as well as managing the high increase in the workload, however despite the challenges we were able to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members in our community. In the wake of the pandemic, many funders have stepped up to contribute in any way they could including vouchers and food parcels. We could not do our work and support such magnitude of people without this support from funders.

HIGHLIGHTS

The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have far-affected lives of refugees, asylum, and migrants as most of them were working in the informal sector or low-paid jobs. However, despite the impact of the pandemic and extension of the lockdown period, welfare continued helping vulnerable migrants and refugees' families in urgent need of immediate financial assistance and food parcels. The programme managed to assist clients with cash payments either via relevant mobile payment system or EFT transfers.

Welfare also extended its actions to support migrants, refugees, and asylum seeker from across South Africa financially. Through the partnership with different organizations and private individuals, the Welfare programme managed to distribute 4,500 food parcels in the community with the help of community leaders. The content of the food parcel was sufficient, of high nutritional standard and the team ensured that it was culturally appropriate for the beneficiaries served.

Telephonic assessments remained the main means of contact with our clients. As a result of COVID-19, level of vulnerabilities increased. The Welfare programme responded by providing extensive support to people living with disabilities, the chronically ill and aged clients in the form of food parcels and long-term financial support. The Welfare programme developed a Google form for recipients to complete before receiving any kind of assistance as a measure of accountability to the donor. A WhatsApp group was created for the beneficiaries in which they received clear instructions to follow in order to redeem the vouchers and also a way for the programme to follow up and provide feedback to the donor.

The Social Relief of Distress grant (SRD) process was now open to asylum seekers as well as special permit holders as a result of litigation on the part of Scalabrini Advocacy team. Members of the Welfare team provided clients with assistance and guidance in terms of the new application process.

- The programme developed a welfare hotline as well as WhatsApp platform for communication with clients. The program was compelled to conduct telephonic welfare assessments as client contact was restricted. The programme also developed a specialized collaboration with Adonis Musati Project (AMP) in terms of meeting the high influx of requests for assistance with basic needs and also developed a system where food parcels will be delivered directly to the doors of recipients identified.
- The project also liaised with a diverse group of community leaders ranging from the Congolese, Burundian, Rwandan, Somalian and Zimbabwean communities to assist with the delivery of the food parcels.
- Due to the increase in the number of welfare requests and demand, the programme increased the capacity of consultants by two to ensure that many clients were served promptly.
- The team also provided workshops and training via Zoom and this increased the level of accessibility for clients while at the same time improving the skills of digital navigation for clients as well as staff.
- Within the welfare programme clients who are part of the men's group and personal development programme were, upon completion of the programme, four men received their PRM small business growth grant which will help them reactivate their business activities and 6 received UNHCR business support grant for the lockdown period.
- Many Scalabrini clients reported that the support they received from the Welfare desk had helped with the most needed necessities such as food, electricity, or water when no-one in the house was earning.
- Due to the national lockdown, it was not possible for clients to travel to the Scalabrini Centre to collect their food parcels. The team developed a food parcel delivery system that populated registers by area of residence to ensure efficient and accountable distribution of food. Community leaders known to both Adonis Musati and Scalabrini were enlisted to collect food parcels and deliver them either to homes or to a safe meeting point in their area of residence.

IMPACT

9,456

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE ASSISTED



4,500

FOOD PARCELS

4,496

DIRECT CASH PAYMENTS



457

VOUCHERS

OUR BACK-A-BUDDY CAMPAIGN: UNEXPECTED GENEROSITY IN THE TIMES OF COVID-19

This year's pandemic has ravaged our economy. Unemployment flared up to 32% at the end of 2020 as South Africa's Gross Domestic Product fell dramatically by a fifth. Some of the people behind these statistics are our clients.

Many of our clients are in precarious documentation states - and are therefore more likely to take 'informal' jobs. It is these informal jobs that were most severely impacted by the pandemic. This, paired with the initial exclusion from government support for non-citizens, meant that demands on the Welfare team rocketed. Between April and August 2020, Welfare provided direct aid to approximately 3,500 people – a 1000% rise from the usual target for this period.

HOSPITALITY IN BARREN TIMES

If ever you have been far from home, you will know that the generosity of strangers is a very special and powerful commodity. In ancient Greek culture, xenia (which translates as 'guest-friendship') sets out reciprocal rules of hospitality that apply to both host and guest. This concept is crystallized in our own religions and cultures - like our sense of ubuntu. How xenia plays out in the modern world, especially in the context of migration in South Africa, is vital to our work at Scalabrini – and vital to migrants and refugees far from their homes.

You would think that in this context of global crisis, dwindling incomes, unsteady jobs and uncertain futures, xenia would be at its lowest. However, in 2020, we witnessed the most unexpected generosity: an organic, bountiful generosity from all corners of society.

EMERGENCY NEEDS AND EMERGENCY FUNDS

As an urgent reaction to need, our Back A Buddy campaign was started in April 2020. We had moderate expectations - and posted about the campaign online. Suddenly it took off - with donations being made by individuals from Johannesburg to New York!

Overall, the fund raised an impressive R275, 554 (\$18,782). These funds were distributed by the Welfare team based on assessments with clients. Both documented and undocumented people received direct financial support, with a focus on assisting disabled, chronically ill, elderly or single-parent clients.

WHERE THE FUNDS WENT

Clients' battles to survive in lockdown are is illustrated in the statistics around the fund's use: 95% of the funds went towards food basics. Jane Kanswe, our Welfare Programme Manager, was relieved to be able to meet some of the need. 'We are very grateful and it means we are able to assist many more people who are so desperately in need right now,' she wrote to donors.

Clients receiving funds at that time also expressed the emergency 'gap' that the fund plugged. 'With children and an ailing father back home,' wrote one client, 'I do not normally stock food here [in South Africa] but send home for my family. The stocks I had here could not sustain me any longer. It really helped a lot getting assistance from the Welfare.'

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Apr 27, 2020 - USD \$ 15.80

"All the love and support from an ex-volunteer, and stay safe!" - Jilo

Apr 27, 2020 - USD \$ 26.34

"Great work love" - Jos and Fiona

Apr 26, 2020 - R 525.00

"Thank you for all that you do to support and protect migrants. " - Z

Apr 26, 2020 - USD \$ 17.54

"Thank you for all the hard work and supporting the vulnerable in tu
Hannes

Apr 25, 2020 - R 105.00

"Stay safe and thank you" - Natasha

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 52.68

"So proud of you all" - Maggie Manicom

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 20.00

"Go Scalabrini team!! You are heroes!" - Carley Cook

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 52.68

"Good luck and good health x" - Eve

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 200.18

"Thank you for the opportunity, love warriors!" - Anonymous

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 60.00

"Sending our thoughts and best wishes to all our South African frie

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 30.86

"Hope this helps to Back some Buddies in need. Best wishes." - M

Apr 25, 2020 - USD \$ 105.36

LOOKING FORWARD...

The welfare programme will continue with receiving requests via the welfare programme hotline number and via emails in order to avoid the risks of viral transmission. A further factor to consider is the vulnerability mostly of the welfare clients being seen who already are disadvantaged.



The centre is registered with the South African Department of Social Development as a non-profit organisation (021-079 NPO), as a youth and child care centre (C7569) and as a Public Benefit Organisation with the South African Revenue Services (930012808) and governed by a Trust (IT2746/2006).
Auditors: CAP Chartered Accountants.

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