

Solidarity Fund Integrated Annual Report and Update Media Briefing - Presentation Script

Tandi Nzimande – CEO

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TANDI NZIMANDE • 18 MONTHS IN REVIEW (10 MINS)

- Good morning everyone! Thank you for joining us. We have a full agenda today which will cover a review of our Integrated Annual Report, announcement of our Annual Financial Statements and report back on our PWC audit and an update on our 18 months of existence. The Audited Financial Statements, and Integrated Annual Report will be available to view and download immediately following this briefing on the Solidarity Fund's website, and media releases will be disseminated with updates on the Fund's activities from the end of the reporting period to date.
- The Fund's CFO, Zanele Ngwepe, will be taking you through a detailed Annual Financial Statements presentation and I encourage you to visit our website to view the detailed information.
- Since our last media and stakeholder update in March, a lot has happened.
 - South Africa has been hit by a third wave. This was by far the most dangerous of the waves and left South Africa reeling. As we finally start seeing the back of it, it seems that everyone now knows someone who has been infected or affected by the virus.
 - Another, more positive, development has been the access to vaccines across the country with vaccinations opening up to all adults. The equitable distribution of these vaccines is essential in the fight against COVID-19 and, therefore, a key focus of the Fund.
 - Finally, in July of this year, South Africa experienced civil unrest across KZN and parts of Gauteng. This unrest led to violence and looting that compromised food security, production and logistics and resulted in the destruction or closure of numerous businesses, as well as significant job losses. This threatens to put even more strain on a nation struggling under the weight of COVID-19 and related lockdowns.
- As a rapid response vehicle, the Fund has worked, as always, to respond to these events quickly to deliver as much relief and assistance impact as possible using the funds South Africans have entrusted us with.
- Over **R3.22 billion in COVID relief funding** has been raised as of the end of our first financial year. To date, a total of **R3.44 billion** has been raised. These additional

funds are due to a further fundraising drive undertaken to fund the Solidarity Fund's work on the national vaccination campaign.

- Of the funds raised for COVID relief, **R2.62 billion** has been disbursed to date as follows:
In the Health Response Pillar **R1.97b**
In the Humanitarian Pillar **R371m; and**
In the Behavioural Change Pillar **R282m**
- The remaining funds have been allocated to interventions across our pillars that are either in approval stage or in the process of execution.
- **A third phase** of fundraising was undertaken after the Solidarity Fund established the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund as a direct response to the challenges resulting from the unrest in July. This fundraising drive raised R489m, including R400m that was donated by the National Treasury from the RDP fund. In addition, and with the permission of Naspers, R100m was redirected from their original R500m grant into this new Fund. This was to provide seed money for the HCRF in order to enable interventions to happen rapidly. This additional R100m together with a further R89m raised takes the total available to the Fund to R589m
- The HCRF runs as a distinct part of the Solidarity Fund and is in line with its mandate. It operates with a segregated bank account but, as a part of the Solidarity Fund, it remains subject to the same stringent adherence to governance and the same commitment to making as significant an impact as possible with the limited funds available.
- Despite the evolving role of the Solidarity Fund, our objectives have stayed the same in all we do.
 - Mobilise and coordinate financial contributions from all South Africans and members of the international community.
 - Use contributions to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by augmenting the government's health response and the social consequences of the pandemic.
 - Bring South Africans together to play their part in combatting COVID-19.
- While the financial figures are important, the real impact can be judged in the people that we have affected. First and foremost, the Solidarity Fund is about humanity – it is about the subsistence farmer who can continue to provide for their family. It's about the family of the patient who can breathe a sigh of relief as they witness their loved one getting the treatment they need, it's the GBV survivor who is offered comfort and support through the GBV Command centre. These are the people that remind us of why we are doing what we do.
- Over the last 18 months, the demands of the pandemic have changed, as a result, the interventions and campaigns we have supported have done the same.
- In our first year, we had many successes, from

- Distributing critically needed PPE for healthcare workers at the very beginning of the pandemic
 - Expanding testing capacity
 - Supporting, acquiring and donating locally manufactured ventilators
 - Distributing essential equipment – starting in the hot spot provinces then this year distributing essential equipment across the country,
 - The construction of a modular hospital wing at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital in the Eastern Cape,
- These not only servicing the immediate, urgent needs but are contributing to a legacy of general improvement of the health system which will be felt well after the pandemic.
 - I am no less proud of the work we have done under our pillars of Humanitarian Relief and Behavioural Change.
 - In our humanitarian efforts, the food and agricultural input vouchers have been far reaching because we are able to make a difference in the lives of people who were already living on the edge, and on whom COVID has brought even more difficulty.
 - Likewise, our support against the scourge of gender-based violence (GBV), was critical. Again, we're talking about the most vulnerable in our society, who as a result of the pandemic, saw a much-increased level of abuse.
 - Under the Behavioural Change pillar, we rolled out highly successful communications campaigns targeting core preventative behaviours in mitigating the effects of the spread of the virus. We worked closely with civil society and faith based organisations, communicated in multiple languages across a number of media platforms and supported the National Department of Health's Covid alert app launch and awareness campaign. In December we launched a large-scale integrated communications campaign focusing on preventative behaviours, and are currently in the process of rolling out a large scale, integrated demand creation communication campaign.
 - To ensure effective and targeted messaging, we funded research studies and engaged with National Government, Civil Society and Business to maximise our efforts and reach as many South Africans as possible.
 - With the arrival of vaccines into South Africa earlier this year, the Fund continued in its role as additive to the national and provincial health efforts, assisting in the National Vaccine Roll-out Programme. Our support of Government's vaccination efforts started with the down payment of R283 million needed to secure South Africa's entry to COVAX at the end of last year. Equitable access to vaccines is essential to the success of the roll-out. The Fund has, since the start of the vaccination campaign, supported the MRC Sisonke Vaccine Implementation Study aimed at vaccinating 500 000 (496 514 vaccinated) frontline healthcare workers, provided technical assistance support to the NDoH and provided funding to the

NDoH call centre.

- More recently, we have also funded temporary vaccination outreach sites across the country that will add to increasing the overall national number of jabs per day to achieve the targeted 250,000-300,000 jabs daily. These additional sites will contribute to improving geographical coverage, population reach and, especially, access to vaccinations by the most vulnerable and hard to reach communities.
- Access to vaccines, however, is only one part of the job. Vaccine inertia, hesitancy and misinformation have been a stumbling block to vaccine roll-out success around the world. To counter this, the Fund initiated and executed two integrated communications campaigns aimed at vaccine awareness and adoption. The first ran from the 12th of May 2021 and ended on the 30th of June. And the second has launched and will roll-out in a phased manner over the next few months.
- Finally, I would like to touch on our Audited Annual Financial Statements and the audit undertaken by PwC.
- Due to the uniqueness of the Fund, it has been a very rigorous and detailed audit. It was started in March and only concluded in September. The time was well spent. It was a very thorough and comprehensive audit which we expect will reassure our donors, partners, stakeholders and all South Africans. We have no doubt that the integrity of the audit and the process will stand up to scrutiny globally in terms of accountability and transparency.
- The integrity of the audit and the process is enhanced by the fact that PwC, the external auditors provided their services pro-bono, the value of which is priceless and as an organisation we publicly extend our gratitude.
- We are proud of the fact that, despite the speed at which we made decisions and were able to impact on the crisis, the audit has shown that we operated to the highest governance standards and the governance, controls and processes were in place to ensure that all donor funds were put to good use, and there was no wastage or misappropriation of funds. We believe that we have lived up to the great responsibility and expectations of our donors and all South Africans, we have delivered on our mandate with integrity and to the best of our ability, and we have safeguarded the funds entrusted to us.
- We have also lived up to our commitment for full transparency. We have shown where all of our money came from, and how it was spent. We have 29 reports on our website, totalling 428 pages. There are 6 reports under the Health pillar, 8 under Humanitarian Response and 14 under Behavioural Change. Together, these reports detail every project we have concluded, who received contracts and where the money was spent.
- Over the past year, the Solidarity Fund has been a platform for many South Africans

to show their support in the fight against COVID-19 in many different ways. Whether it be individuals who gave what they could through crowdsourcing platforms, large corporates that are continuing to step up and support the Fund either through funds or in-kind donations, or the international community, it has been an amazing outpouring of support for the country.

- The most recent successful fundraising to support the vaccine rollout, on the one hand, and then again, the Humanitarian Crisis Relief Fund, would not have been possible without the support of our donors, and bears testimony to the successful collaboration the Fund has had with a variety of partners across civil society, the public and private sectors in producing results that we can all be proud of.
- I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Board, the Exco, all our donors, stakeholders, partners and staff, current and previous, for your incredible work and support since the inception of the fund.
- South Africans will continue to benefit from the solidarity shown by all in responding to this debilitating pandemic.
- **For this, I am so very proud and grateful. Thank you for the solidarity.**