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Combatting Covid-19

Due to the (necessary) severity of the recent lockdown in South Africa, the most vulnerable in Grahamstown/ Makhanda (proposed new official name) were put at risk of starvation. Local residents have devised a scheme (Makhanda Circle of Unity) to fundraise and provide food (as well as facemasks and other sanitation products) for the poorest members of the community. So far they have provided over 7000 weekly food parcels as well as assisting with supplies and volunteers at

24 community kitchens. FOGADD was delighted to be able to make a donation to the fund in order to help facilitate this vital work.



Helping out at soup kitchens



Volunteering at Whistle Stop

A report by FOGADD volunteer Helen Megone

Whistle Stop School is one of the key projects run by GADRA, an education focused charity which FOGADD supports. The programme aims to combat illiteracy through small group teaching at two primary schools in the Grahamstown/Makhanda township. With the effectiveness of the pilot having been shown in an English medium, as of 2019, they have been working with students in isiXhosa at Tanti school. Happily the results from the end of year report suggest it is

just as effective in this context. On average, the Tanti Grade 2's Oral Reading Fluency had improved from 3wpm (words per minute) in January to 36 wpm by the year-end—a far greater increase than would normally be expected for this age-group.

In early February 2020, I was lucky enough to spend a couple of weeks

volunteering with Whistle Stop. I saw first hand the enthusiasm and excitement of the children, as well as being part of the first ever Whistle Stop Grade 3 maths lessons which are being trialled this year at St. Mary's. I was also able to admire the improvements to the infrastructure at Tanti which were implemented by Whistle Stop. As well as the Whistle Stop classrooms themselves, the programme has funded the redecoration of two Grade 2 classrooms ensuring that the impact of the project will be felt for many years to come.



Other News

As mentioned above, the coronavirus pandemic, and the steps taken by the SA government to combat it, have had a serious impact in Grahamstown/ Makhanda. Many of our partner charities and schools have been working in various ways to try to offer support to those who require it. Here are some of the ways in which they have been adapting to the situation.

- CSD (the Centre for Social Development) has been working on a project to co-ordinate with local radio stations, and the local newspaper (Grocott's Mail) to get educational activities including reading material and maths related games into homes during the school closure.
- At PJ Olivier (the school attended by the majority of

our scholars), the teachers have created Whatsapp groups for each grade to ensure continued communication with their students. In some subjects (such as accounting) they have been able to create online resources for students with access to data and devices. Where necessary they have also delivered resource packs to those students who are unable to access online learning.

- Victoria Girls High School have also been busy throughout the lockdown period. They have produced regular lockdown newsletters keeping both learners and parents informed with the detailed plans they have put in place for remote learning. In particular they have focused on reminding

the girls of the importance of self-care and looking after themselves in these difficult times

- St Mary's Daycare Centre was able to continue to offer a daily meal to children when schools first closed but had to stop when the restrictions tightened. They hope to restart the programme once lockdown eases.



How can you help?

We are very grateful to all our supporters, whether they make one off or regular donations including recent donations to our Covid appeal. It would be great if you could spread the word amongst your friends and like our facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/FOGADD/>



Since at present it is difficult to hold fund raising events we are seeking additional donations. If you can help in any way please contact us by email to: dme-gone@hotmail.com



Annual review 2019

If you would like to read our review of funding it is available on our website [here](#). We maintained our income over £20,000 (actual figure £20,232) for the year ended 31 March 2019. This was slightly lower than the previous year but aided by a better exchange rate we were able to pay scholars' school fees and maintain the level of support which we have been giving to our key projects.