

FIGHTING POVERTY ACROSS OUR NATION

NLC COVID-19 RELIEF FUND



Long jump star
Khotso Mokoena.

COVID-19 devastation has spared no one, including the Central Gauteng Athletics, which received funding from the NLC.

NLC's COVID-19 Relief Fund rescues the NPO sector

Sport also benefits from the COVID-19 relief funding

South Africa is home to many world-class athletes and many of these world beaters call Gauteng home. One organisation that has been at the forefront of unearthing and nurturing talent in the province over the years has been Central Gauteng Athletics (CGA).

The CGA is an athletics provincial body that is responsible for the administration (in the broadest sense) of the sport of athletics in the central part of Gauteng. It has more than 270 clubs and more than 500 provincial athletes competing in South Africa's track and field, cross-country, road-running and race-walking championships.

The CGA is one of many



In March, the CGA hosted a workshop to equip its officials and coaches with the skills needed to be a team manager.

sporting entities which has been at the receiving end of the good work done by the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) in funding worthy causes around the country.

CGA GM Mandla Radebe says the partnership with the NLC has enabled the organisation to reach out to more athletes in the province.

"The NLC has made it possible for us to reach all communities in our province, and most importantly [it has] given us the resources to deliver the support and programmes to develop and empower our athletes, officials, administrators and coaches," says Radebe.

"We are proud to have

worked with and be supported by the commission over the years and we hope that this partnership will improve the life of our communities through athletics participation.

"Our mandate derives from the community which subscribes to the view that sport presents a vehicle to be used not only to build a healthy nation, but also to transform our society.

He continues: "We have a number of prominent athletes that are coming from previously disadvantaged communities and we would like to continue to support them in their pursuit to become world champions."

Part of the CGA's activities is to ensure that there is active athletics in the province and that all the aspiring youth get an opportunity to excel in the sport.

The CGA also helps with

the upliftment of sports administrators.

In March, it hosted the annual CGA team managers' workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to equip CGA-affiliated officials and coaches on the roles and responsibilities of being a team manager for the province so that teams are professionally and effectively managed.

Radebe explains that for the sport to be sustainable and keep on producing athletes that will represent South Africa at the highest level, financial support was crucial.

"We once more thank the NLC for seeing it fit to invest in sport in the country.

Sport, as we know, plays a crucial role in bringing people from different backgrounds together, and we can only hope that the commission doesn't tire in investing in the wellbeing of South Africans."



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Village escapes
COVID-19 wrath,
thanks to donation



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Christmas came
early for staff at
Rearuta Day Care

Missing Children South Africa (WC)

Good Samaritan springs up a surprise, opens purse in group's hour of darkness

Salaries will be paid this month, thanks to Lotto

The National Lotteries Commission (NLC) has managed to close a gap by assisting those trying to fight child trafficking and finding missing children across the country, especially during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Those working at Missing Children South Africa, a non-profit organisation based in Bellville in the Western Cape, got a huge relief when the organisation received funding from the NLC. The grant will pay for their salaries at the end of this month.

"We're deeply appreciative, the association was elated and incredibly grateful," explains Tom Dixon, the organisation's MD.

"The pandemic has obviously had a dreadful and devastating impact on donations and funding of Missing Children South Africa, which is completely understandable as everybody is experiencing their own crisis

and trying to navigate through these uncharted waters.

"We were just informed by our biggest [and only corporate donor] that they are ending their support to Missing Children South Africa as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We requested emergency funding from the NLC COVID-19 response campaign in order to just pay our salaries for the month."

The organisation only had one corporate sponsor responsible for the "Adopt-a-Salary" initiative. The monthly donation from this company was utilised to pay for salaries.

Dixon says the notice (to terminate the sponsorship) is deeply distressing. In a desperate bid to keep its doors open, the organisation has already sent out letters requesting donations in the hope of finding a corporate willing to continue with the "Adopt-A-Salary" initiative.

"There is a person behind every donation made. There is a family comforted by every action taken in the fight to find our missing children. There is a happy story on the other side of one decision made by you, to join the fight to find missing children.

Give today and be part of the happy story – a child found, a family reunited."

Established in March 2007 in response to the kidnapping and brutal murders of seven-year-old Sheldean Human in Pretoria and 12-year-old Anestacia Wiese from Mitchells Plain, Missing Children South Africa assists and supports families that find themselves in similar situations.

Explains Dixon: "We work closely with the South African Police Service [SAPS] and other government bodies, as well as non-governmental organisations and private initiatives, to assist in the recovery and safe return of a missing person.

"A child goes missing every

five hours in South Africa, according to figures [released] by the SAPS missing persons bureau in 2013. This adds up to a total of 1 697 children per year.

"These figures have, however, not been updated since 2013 and the reality is most certainly far graver seven years later. According to Missing Children South Africa's statistics, 77% of children are found.

He continues: "Sadly, this still leaves us with at least 23% of the children not being located. Trafficking of children is a global problem affecting large numbers of children."

Dixon further mentions how education plays a vital role in empowering children and parents. The organisation utilises additional funding to promote with its education programmes – Tips for Children and Tips for Parents.

The programmes are targeted at vulnerable and orphaned children and children with disabilities.

These educational programmes are also shared with parents, guardians and the families who take care of these children. The focus is not only on

the dangers, but also the solutions with regards to what to do to keep these children safe, and especially what not to do. The organisation's services are free.

Dixon adds that the survival of the organisation is directly impacted by the external funds they receive.

"We are based in the Western Cape but operate nationally and, as such, are the most recognised, free community service for missing children [and adults] in the country.

"As we all know, in South Africa and even around the world, we have become heartedly but understandably desensitised to crime. Funding remains the greatest challenge for Missing Children South Africa, and your support would make an incredible change in the current circumstances.

"This will ensure that we continue our important work of assisting incredibly traumatised parents and guardians during the period that their child has gone missing, and ensure that everything is done to track and locate the missing children and eventually bringing the missing children home safely."

Figures show that a child goes missing every five hours in SA

Arise and Shine Motivation (LP)

Village escapes COVID-19 wrath, thanks to donation

Grant used to buy masks, sanitisers

When President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the nationwide lockdown, many businesses and organisations had to abruptly stop their operations. Not only did this impact negatively on their operations, but it also impacted negatively on the livelihoods of their employees.

Arise and Shine Motivation, a non-profit organisation based at Gandlanani village in Malamulele, Limpopo found itself in a similar situation, unable to provide its services to the community and pay salaries to staff due to the national lockdown.

The lockdown also brought with it the challenge of introducing new ways to work as COVID-19 required a drastic change in how they serviced the community.

Mafanato Agnes Mabasa, who runs the Arise and Shine Motivation, is grateful for the grant they received from the relief fund through the National Lotteries Commission (NLC).

The NLC disbursed R150-million in proactive funding towards relief to counter the effect of COVID-19 pandemic, of which R10-million was direct-



Arise and Shine helps children from child-headed households and those raised by grandparents.



The organisation credits the lack of infections in its centre to the items they bought to protect children and the community.

The funds ensured that the organisation continued to operate at the height of the lockdown. This included making donations to the community and enabling children to continue with schooling. They achieved this by conducting door-to-door visits to families that required their services.

The drop-in centre provides care for children from child-headed households, those raised by grandparents, and those identified by the provincial department of social development as vulnerable.

The Arise and Shine Motivation caters for children whose ages are relevant for grades R-7.

"Apart from the after-school feeding initiative, extra-mural activities, and homework support, we also provide counselling services to children who require this service.

"This service is provided with the support from social workers from the department of social development."

The relationship between Arise and Shine Motivation and the NLC started in 2018 when the organisation first applied for funding. Before funding, it was destitute and lacked resources.

Mabasa is grateful for the grants that her organisation received from the NLC.

ed towards the provision of food and hygiene goods hampers.

The centre took advantage of this opportunity and applied for relief funding. Mabasa says the funding enabled them to procure masks, sanitisers, and sanitary towels.

She credits the lack of infections in their centre to the items they bought to protect the children, staff, and the community.

Masana Arts Development (LP)

The show goes on for Limpopo's Masana arts organisation

Sector is ravaged by the lockdown

The creative sector in South Africa was severely affected by the COVID-19 lockdown which was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on March 23.

Fortune Tebogo Maswanganyi, who is chairperson of the Masana Arts Development in Limpopo, says: "When the first lockdown was announced, this presented many challenges for us. Among them is that we could not pay salaries to our employees as we raise funds through our events in order to sustain ourselves."

Maswanganyi explains that to help slow down the COVID-19 infection rate, the group was forced to cancel all scheduled shows and performances as large gatherings were discouraged under lockdown regulations.

The organisation was founded in 2017 to focus on, among others, the facilitation of the development of arts and culture in rural communities; promote



Masana's flagship programmes include Limpopo Music Awards.

indigenous music; and the development and implementation of art programmes such as wood carving, cultural pottery, cultural paintings, and cultural beading and sewing.

The organisation's flagship programmes include the Limpopo Music Awards; Kofifi Dance Movement; North West Music Awards; Setswana Traditional Dance Expo, and Limpopo Digital Plug.

According to Maswanganyi,



Arts groups around the country were forced to cancel performances due to lockdown regulations on gatherings.

“We are grateful to the NLC because the grant helped us pay salaries

there are many challenges in running an organisation with such a serious lack of funding, hence they appreciate the National Lotteries Commission's grant for funding the arts in rural communities. They aim to provide a platform where talent

in rural communities is exposed. The organisation was awarded a grant this month. "We are grateful because the grant provided relief to our full- and part-time employees. We were able to pay them stipends which helped them provide for their families."

Inter Church Women's Icosé Multi-Purpose (ICWIMP) (NC)

Sweet rewards flow from Lotto's grant

Church group touched by the NLC's generosity

About 265 beneficiaries from Kimberley in the Northern Cape reaped the rewards from the National Lotteries Commission's (NLC's) COVID-19 response campaign.

These beneficiaries – from the Inter Church Women's "icosé" Multi-Purpose project – include staff, board members and the organisation's beneficiaries.

After the organisation received the NLC contribution earlier this month, it purchased protective personal equipment comprising masks, sanitisers, and thermometers for screening. It also paid staff members' stipends.

Those who benefitted from the grant reside in the greater Galeshewe township.

According to Audrey Tau, the project manager, the chosen Lotto grant beneficiaries were finding it difficult and unable to even buy some necessities for themselves.

"We are still waiting for the purchased items to be delivered to the organisation," says Tau.

"As the organisation, we appreciate this contribution because we did not have enough funds to assist our beneficiaries through this pandemic.

"We were very delighted, excited and extremely happy to receive a message from the NLC. We felt proud.

Continues Tau: "This also shows how the NLC recognises and values the impact of the services that our organisation is rendering in our community."

The organisation was established in 2001 after concerns were raised by local churches that the youth were abusing



Members of the Inter Church Women's "icosé" Multi-Purpose project in Kimberley will use the National Lotteries donation to fight social ills like alcohol and drug abuse.

drugs, alcohol and leading unhealthy lifestyles, which resulted in teenage pregnancies.

The organisation has 10 board members, a project manager, an administrator, one coordi-

nator, and 20 caregivers based at a Home Community Based Care project.

Western Cape Cerebral Palsy Association (WCCPA)

Cerebral palsy sufferers not left behind

Lotto reaches out to disabled and their families

The people living with cerebral palsy and other associated disabilities in the Western Cape are grateful for the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) assistance amid the Coronavirus nationwide lockdown. The Western Cape Cerebral Palsy Association (WCCPA) has expressed its gratitude after the sufferers and their families, 232 in total, were chosen as direct beneficiaries of financial assistance from the NLC's COVID-19 response campaign.

Those who benefitted live in under-resourced communities in the Cape Metropole. These include Bellville, Delft, Guguletu, Hanover Park, Khayelitsha, Lavender Hill, Mitchells Plain, Nyanga, Parkwood Estate, Retreat, Steenberg and Vrygrond.

The recipients were identified by the association through referral channels ranging from community health-care facilities, schools for learners with special educational needs, and social workers from the provincial department of social Development.

"The focus is on whether the WCCPA is best suited to address the needs of an individual referred to us and an assessment is made by social workers and occupational therapists in this regard," says the association's fundraiser Hilary Halladey.

"Should we not be suited for the needs of the individual, a referral is made to other organisations which will be best suited to respond to the needs of that individual. The income streams of the WCCPA include contract fees from protective employment and family contributions.

Halladey explains further: The COVID-19 lockdown resulted in both these income streams ceasing. While the care of residents at Rosedon House and the support to the individuals in the other projects had to continue, we would not have been in a position to pay salaries to staff who were required to continue providing services to the beneficiaries of its other services."

The association believes the support from the NLC has played a vital part, especially for funding income in recent years, says Halladey, adding that they are extremely thankful for the donation from the commission.

The non-profit organisation, which was founded in the 1950s by concerned parents, offers services to adults and children struggling with cerebral palsy and other associated disabilities.

Explains Halladey: "The association was born from the efforts of this parental body and the support of a few generous do-



Seen hard at work at The Village Work Centre are: Rolene Abels, Vanessa Asia, Fizelette Soldaat, and Shanon Petersen. The centre is used for skills development and protective employment programme for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities.



The residents of Rosedon House who can no longer be cared for by their families, or have no families, have benefitted from the NLC grant. The Rosedon House mainly caters for many elderly people who require high-care attention.

nors. Over the many years, it has grown to over 70 staff members.

"The organisation has redeveloped its methods, skills and assets on an ongoing basis. We concentrate our efforts across five projects providing services for adults and children with cerebral palsy, the majority of whom live in poor and underprivileged areas in and around Cape Town.

"The organisation strives to break down the many barriers faced by people living with disabilities."

The association's various projects include the following:

- De Heide Special Care Centre, which provides individual and group educational programmes for children with severe to profound disabilities. The organisation also provides transport for these children in a specialised bus.

- The Village Work Centre is for skills development and protective employment programme for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. The organisation provides specialised transport, without which the beneficiaries would have little or no opportunity to work.

- Rosedon House Residential

Home is a residential facility for adults with disabilities who can no longer be cared for by their families, or have no families. Many of the residents are elderly and require high-care attention.

- The Cerebral Palsy Clinic, located at The Red Cross Children's Hospital, provides vital therapeutic interventions for hundreds of children with cerebral palsy.

- Our Hope Community Programme is an occupational day programme for adults with disabilities who otherwise would have no social outlet or opportunity for occupational stimulation.

The organisation has been working together with the NLC since 2001 and has received 12 grant allocations during that period.

Halladey reveals that the grant from the NLC's COVID-19 Relief Fund, received recently, has assisted people with disabilities who are extremely vulnerable and at high risk of infection during the global pandemic.

Explains Halladey: "Apart from our residential home, our projects have been closed since the introduction of level 5 nationwide lockdown regulations. "During this time, social workers, occupational therapists and other rehabilitation staff members were working remotely supporting the individuals and their families.



Levi Jaffer is one of the grant beneficiaries.



Saliem Muller, a resident at Rosedon House.

"COVID-19 lockdown had a severe financial and psychological impact on the families of the individuals with disabilities.

"The families of the individuals with disabilities who could not attend the projects were appreciative of the remote support services from the social workers in arranging food relief and occupational therapists in providing assistance with the management of their family members with disabilities.

"As soon as the COVID-19 restrictions began, we recognised the important role that the relief funding would play.

"For the NLC to open a special relief fund and invite beneficiary submissions was indeed forward-thinking of them. We were appreciative of the initiative," concludes Halladey.

The organisation strives to break down the barriers faced by disabled

Witzenberg Association for Persons living with Disabilities (APD) (WC)

Huge sigh of relief for frontline staff at APD

Association elated the NLC grant will keep its doors open

Those on the forefront of the Witzenberg Association for Persons living with Disabilities (APD) are grateful they will continue to assist the vulnerable during strict COVID-19 lockdown regulations through the assistance of the National Lotteries Commission's (NLC's) relief fund.

The organisation is expected to benefit as the contribution will assist with day-to-day operations including rental, telephone and petrol bills, as well as compensating the administration assistant. Although the COVID-19 social relief funding has still not been received yet, the staff are already elated after they were told that they will be the beneficiaries.

"It feels awesome and we are thankful and very excited. I can honestly say that our organisation is thankful for the financial contribution, as it will allow us to continue to render services to our beneficiaries," says Martine Kock, the social work regional manager.

"Beneficiaries need support in all forms and Witzenberg APD is the only organisation in the Ceres area and surrounding

areas that renders services to persons with all types of disabilities.

"She continues: "The NLC is doing great work and should continue to do so, it establishes and elevates organisations such as ours that render services to persons with disabilities. Thank you NLC."

All the professional staff consisting of social workers and the management committee at Witzenberg APD are based in the

to have the appointment of an administrator for years, but did not have the financial means to do so. The position is being remunerated by the Community Work Programme for two days a week.

"The current person who holds the position has an excellent work ethic. She is a great asset to the organisation and it would help if she is able to work a full week."

The organisation was established in 2003 to provide services to persons with disabilities in the Witzenberg district.

"To make the community aware that persons with disabilities also have a voice and equal staff component, there are two social workers, one social auxiliary worker, one admin assistant and a management committee that consists of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, secretary and two additional members. The management committee is serving on a voluntary basis."

Services offered include, among others, the arts and craft groups to persons with disabilities, psychosocial services by social workers through home visits, support services, family care, integration of the client within arts and craft group, and parent support programmes.

Other services that the organisation offers are the commem-

The NLC does great work. It elevates groups like ours

Witzenberg district in the Ceres area, in the Western Cape.

Kock says the branch was extremely excited because the funding will allow staff to continue rendering services to branch beneficiaries.

"The administrator can only work two days a week due to the financial and travelling difficulties that the organisation faces. We have been attempting



APD chairperson Hennie Moses, right, social auxiliary worker Muriel George, social worker Heinrich Marthinus, social worker Jody Grainger, and vice-chairperson Deon Adams. The team has been informed that the organisation will also get relief funds.

oration of calendar events such as International Day for Persons with Disabilities, Youth Day and many other events.

Kock says she cannot wait for the funding to improve the organisation as it needs a financial lift.

Mbonyolosi Community Crèche (LP)

Mbonyolosi sings the praises of National Lotteries

'Staff haven't been paid for months'

Not only has the COVID-19 pandemic affected almost all the sectors of the economy, but it has also put a halt to day-care centres too.

But with the COVID-19 relief funding from the National Lotteries Commission (NLC), certain organisations including a local community crèche in Limpopo stand to survive during this difficult period.

Mbonyolosi Community Crèche, which is situated at Madombidzha Zone 2, has received COVID-19 relief funding from the NLC.

Located under the Makhado local municipality in the Vhembe district, the crèche was established in May 2000 by community members with the help of a local chief.

The crèche's manager, Marubini Martha Tshivhula, 66, says receiving funding is a relief on its own because they will now be able to pay their six employ-



ees affected by the national lockdown.

"Since the lockdown started, things have not been easy. This money will definitely come in handy with the employees since they haven't been receiving their salaries for almost three months,"

says Tshivhula. The pandemic has somehow also managed to deal the crèche a double blow as thieves have been breaking in and stealing from the crèche since the lockdown started.

"Some thugs managed to

enter the crèche through the ceiling and stole some grocery items ranging from maize meal to tomatoes. Even the tyres that the children use during playtime were stolen."

Specialising in early childhood development, the crèche accommodates more than 50 children from more than five villages.

Having established a relationship with the National Lotteries Commission in 2018 after it

donated hundreds of thousands of rand to help the crèche fully function, Tshivhula says the money assisted in some of the challenges the crèche had been encountering.

"Back then, not all children received the social grants because they did not possess birth certificates. That made it impossible for mothers to pay the monthly fees, which resulted in us struggling to pay the workers."

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the NLC set aside R150-million as a relief measure to help non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations, and non-profit companies that struggle to pay stipends and salaries, and general operations in the sector.

The NLC's head of marketing and communications, Ndivhuho Mafela, says COVID-19 has had a negative impact on organisations that serve vulnerable people. Therefore, "the NLC recognises the challenges the pandemic creates in the delivery of services and management of operations", says Mafela.

Mbonyolosi Community Crèche has been battling breakdowns since the lockdown was announced in March.

Qolonathi Makhosikazi Social and Cultural Services (WC)

Opportunity during crisis

Unemployed women and youth produce masks

About 700 children residing in Paarl in the Western Cape will receive face masks to protect them from the novel Coronavirus.

The Qolonathi Makhosikazi Social and Cultural Services is one of the non-profit organisations that have benefitted from the National Lotteries Commission's (NLC's) COVID-19 relief fund campaign.

The organisation will use some of the funding towards the making of masks. These masks are expected to be handed to those residing in Mbekweni township in Paarl, including the local schools in the area.

The organisation's founder and MD Princess Gcwalisile Kabanyane clarifies that they only received the contribution recently and therefore the distribution of personal protective equipment will commence soon.

She says it will also provide job-creation opportunities through stipends and salaries

for at least one month, as the contribution covers only a month, noting that the safety of children remains crucial.

"I must mention that the beneficiaries were grateful, especially women and the youth, as the stipends will mitigate against their sad economic status," explains Kabanyane.

"Some of these women were retrenched as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our partnership with the NLC dates back as early as 2011. We applied for funding responding to the call for application.

"The women who are making the masks are all unemployed and have various skills to offer, this also applies to youth that will be assisting us. I chose them because the funding we applied for was going to create income-generating opportunities for women and the youth."

Each child is expected to receive



Judith Tsoho from Qolonathi Makhosikazi helps make masks.

at least two to three masks and a user-friendly pamphlet explaining how to keep safe, the importance of wearing a mask, and the do's and don'ts with regards to masks as a personal item, the importance of washing hands and sanitizing, and sterilizing.

She continues: "This project will benefit about 20 unemployed youth who will receive a stipend for the awareness campaign they will be doing, while eleven women, who make the masks, will also benefit as well.



"I wish to thank the NLC for its significant response to the pandemic and the plight of the people who lost jobs due to this crisis. Secondly, [I thank the NLC] for assisting us through this contribution to be able to

make a difference where we can as an organisation.

"My message, on behalf of our organisation, is that the NLC has managed to respond positively to the national agenda of fighting the social ills of our society that continue to denigrate the dignity of those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, the poorer of the poorest."

The organisation was established in 2008 to provide charity services and engage in arts and culture fundraising projects.

"We have partnerships with local primary schools where we promote arts and culture as a means of a lifestyle and a tool for socio-economic development and in the promotion of our heritage through workshops, conferences and learners' heritage tours.

"We work closely with the local artists in developing their skills and marketing their artistic performances."

Some of the challenges that the organisation experienced was the restricted freedom of movement and a fear to contract the disease when visiting destitute families where food parcels had to be delivered.

She outlines: "Not being able to assist everyone as the need is huge in Mbekweni to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is also challenging.

"The most disheartening challenge is that some people still do not take this pandemic seriously, and yet people are dying everyday in our township.

"Not much care is taken to protect the children," concludes Kabanyane.

Not being able to assist everyone because of high demand has been a challenge

Peter Pan Down Syndrome Centre (WC)

'NLC shines the light at the end of a darker tunnel'

Hope is ringing out behind closed doors

"The Peter Pan Down Syndrome Centre, along with its staff, parents, children and committee, would like to stand up and put our hands together to say thank you, thank you, and thank you for supporting and giving us hope and light when the road was so dark. You have given us substance when we were struggling body and soul. We thank you for taking care of those people who are always taking care of others without expecting any rewards. You have given us light at the end of a very dark tunnel."

These words came from Kim Cooper, the CEO of the centre in Southfield, Western Cape.

Cooper expressed her gratitude to the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) after the centre was chosen as one of the beneficiaries of the commission's COVID-19 relief funding.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the centre had to close its doors on March 18 as a result of financial strain due to the nationwide lockdown.

Cooper says the need for ad-



Peter Pan staff and children have voiced their gratitude after the NLC donated COVID-19 relief funds to the centre.

ditional funding to pay staff salaries and running costs were too excessive and this was the main reason they applied for the COVID-19 relief fund.

"We have been very blessed to receive funding towards salaries, water and electricity. This has been a great blessing in very trying times," explains Cooper.

"We employ 14 staff members, which includes single parents and persons with special needs. Most of our staff members are the sole breadwinners at their respective homes.

"The NPO [non-profit organisation] salaries are just on the bread line. Funding from the NLC has literally put bread on

the table for 14 households."

All staff members who benefitted from the relief fund are based at the Cape Flats in the Western Cape. Many of them started as parents of children with special needs at the centre.

Although they earn a minimum wage, Cooper mentions that their souls and hearts are fed with so much riches everyday as they enjoy what they are doing, and that is how they survive.

"The funding has enabled all the staff to feed their families and we are eternally gratefully to the NLC's contribution, especially also for recognising NPOs, the important work they do and

the commitment that all NPO employees show.

"Many are struggling to feed their families and we are trying to keep parents and children positive by giving them hope that life will go on. They will have a place to come back to when we can finally open our doors again."

Peter Pan Down Syndrome Centre has been in existence for 34 years and is privately funded. The centre has struggled to keep its doors open due to lack of funding.

Fees are paid by those parents who can afford to contribute and the centre also receives a partial grant from the provincial department of social development.

Fundraising remains critical as the grants and fees are not always enough to meet the centre's financial needs. The NPO says it constantly appreciates all the support it receives from its funders, locally and abroad.

"Prior to 1994, South Africa's education system made little provision for children and learners with special needs, while disadvantaged communities were completely marginalised.

"There were extreme dispar-

ities and discrepancies in the provision for specialised education for the different race groups, with virtually no provision for disabled children from marginalised communities at pre-school level."

The centre was established in Hope Street, Cape Town, in 1986.

"This unique facility defied discrimination at many levels, and elected to serve and nurture all children so that they would be able to look forward to a future of equal opportunity regardless of race, creed or disability."

Cooper says the centre became one of the first facilities in South Africa to extend the scope of an ordinary preschool by including a greater diversity of children to operate according to a set of principles that ensures any preschool learner, more especially those with special needs, is viewed as a valued and member of the community. Peter Pan Down Syndrome Centre also offers a multi-cultural preschool that offers a full day-care and specialised learning facilities for 90 children aged two to seven years from the greater City Bowl and the Cape Flats.

Masakhane Educare Center (NC)

Lotto cures Masakhane's salaries' headache

'There are no words enough to express my joy'

The National Lotteries Commission's (NLC's) COVID-19 relief fund came at the right time for those at the Masakhane Educare Centre in Kuruman in the Northern Cape.

The organisation says the 12 members that received the funding desperately needed it for survival, saying it happened when they least expected to receive any kind of help during the pandemic.

The centre's principal, Saartjie Ilanka, says the members were the ones who needed the contribution the most because after the lockdown, they will not have any source of income.

The centre, based in Bankhara Bodulong village, received the contribution earlier this month.

The centre's partnership with the NLC started in 2016 when



The Masakhane partnership with the NLC started in 2016 when the centre was still operating from crowded mobile classrooms. That has since changed drastically.

the centre was still operating in crowded mobile classrooms.

Ilanka disclosed that while the fees contribute a lot towards staff salaries, the lockdown

has made it impossible for the centre to generate income.

The centre was established 20 years ago after a group of women in the rural community saw the need for an early childhood development centre in the area because children were roaming the streets.

She says when the parents went to work, there was

no place where they could leave their children, a place where the kids would be safe, educated, and cared for.

The centre is open to everyone and values the importance of a solid foundation for every child, irrespective of race, religion, culture, and disability.

"The NLC grant came in handy as staff members could now provide for their families.

"We all got a financial relief. We managed to save our insurance policies from lapsing and we were also able to

put food on the table," says Ilanka.

"I was overwhelmed and grateful that God had finally answered our prayers to survive in these trying times. On behalf of the centre, I would like to thank the NLC from the deepest of my heart for reaching out to us.

"There are no words enough to express how I feel, but to say thank you. May God bless you. We encourage the NLC to keep up the great work that you're doing, by helping the less fortunate," she concludes.



We have managed to save our policies from lapsing and we can feed our families

Rearuta Day Care Center (NC)

Christmas came early for staff at Rearuta Day Care

Lotteries donates relief funding towards salaries

Employees at the Rearuta Day Care Centre were extremely excited, overwhelmed and appreciative when they received the good news that they would be benefitting from the National Lotteries Commission's (NLC's) COVID-19 relief fund.

The NLC's contribution, which was received early this month, assisted 15 employees at this non-profit organisation in Jankemp Dorp in the Northern Cape.

The funding helped the centre with operational needs such as maintenance and salaries of the employees.

It also paid municipal services and electricity.

The partnership between the NLC and the centre, which accommodates 95 beneficiaries, started in 2016.

The organisation's assistant supervisor, Mapaseka Setsetse,



The Rearuta staff and children raise voices to express gratitude for the relief funds from the Lotteries Commission.

se, reveals that they have also purchased more equipment to prepare for COVID-19 precautionary measures, which need to be in place when the centre reopens.

"Everyone was grateful and thankful to receive their salaries while being at home during this pandemic. They were able to provide and sustain their families, dependents, and

reduce their financial stress," explains Setsetse.

"We chose to help our employees because we were not open due to the COVID-19 lockdown."

Rearuta Day Care Centre was founded in 2003 by Rebecca Setsetse. The organisation started on a small scale after its founder saw a need to assist the majority of parents who had to go to work at surrounding farms.

Setsetse says: "She took all the responsibility of gathering and taking care of children on farms where their parents worked. My mother worked hard to form this organisation. She used her own resources to show the love for her community. This was her attempt to create a better society."

The organisation has since grown to a well-equipped centre thanks to entities such as the department of social development and the NLC.

It continues to provide preschool education and other educational programmes and activities. The centre also aims to eradicate malnutrition by providing two meals per day for its beneficiaries, and to help lower incidents of child abuse by creating a safer and secure environment.

"To the NLC, we would like to thank you very much for your support and contribution towards our organisation during these tough times. We feel blessed to have you in our lives and in helping our communities to achieve greater heights."



Children and staff feel safe and cared for thanks to the Lotteries Commission.



The play area is where many dreams are shaped for the children of Masakhane.

Sonskynhoekie pre-primary (WC)

I cried and laughed at the same time, remembers Sonskynhoekie principal

Staff at the ECD centre all got a stipend from NLC

“When I received the message from the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) that we will be benefitting from its COVID-19 relief funding, I got overwhelmed. I had mixed emotions of being so excited. I was crying and laughing at the same time. I was so happy, and I know that the Lord has blessed me and our organisation,” says Hester Wonderlik, a school principal at Sonskynhoekie pre-primary in Oudtshoorn in the Western Cape.

The pre-primary was established in 1993 to ensure children up to six years get quality early childhood education.

The Western Cape is the epicentre for COVID-19 pandemic in the country and due to strict nationwide lockdown restrictions, many across the province faced the possibilities of not getting any income and being unable to provide for their families. Wonderlik is delighted for having asked for help towards the payment of salaries for her staff.



Scores of children prepare to get served a balanced nutritional meal.



The ECD centre offers food distribution to 124 kids every day.



Sonskynhoekie pre-primary principal Hester Wonderlik.



They [NLC] really make a difference in the lives of our [poor] people

“In the middle of this month [June] all our staff members received a stipend from the COVID-19 relief contribution fund. They really appreciate the assistance from the National Lotteries Commission [NLC] because now they are able to support their families by providing for them,” says Wonderlik.

After seeing an advert on TV from the NLC, inviting all early childhood development (ECD) centres to apply for funding, Wonderlik decided to also apply in an attempt to ease the financial burden on her staff.

She explains that since the lockdown was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in March, her concern had been the hardships that her colleagues had to battle everyday.

“We want to take the opportunity to thank the NLC for their generous contribution,” she says.



Principal Hester Wonderlik is joined by Oudtshoorn mayor Colan Sylvester.

“They really make a difference in the lives of our people, and they have also made sure

our building is well maintained. We are really blessed and honoured for their help.”



Pupils Gabriella Wonderlik and Tatum Jansen are joined by the mayor, the principal, and well-wishers during the opening of the centre.



The opening of the ECD centre was made possible with funds donated by the Lotteries Commission.

Wonderlik mentions that they believe in instilling quality early childhood education through dedication and passion shared by a group of 11 staff members.

The ECD centre also offers a safe environment for the little ones by offering a balanced nutritional meal everyday to 124 children and parental programmes.