



Y-TALK

www.saymca.org.za

Empowering Young People for Life, Leadership & Service

From the NGS



As we enter week 2 of the Level 4 shutdown, our lives in quarantine having taken some kind of shape. Life with restrictions is becoming normalised to some extent, even as the pain for many without jobs or who are sick, is putting strain on local communities.

Our neighbours in Zimbabwe are also taking strain. We asked the NGS of Zimbabwe YMCA, Gcinekile Masiye, to write something about what is taking place in his country. He gives us a message of solidarity. Our prayers are with all of our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe right now. We are with you in spirit!

CROSS BORDER SOLIDARITY

My South African colleagues. We are just across the border but right now it feels like we may as well be in another continent altogether. But we are in this together and the Zimbabwe YMCA stands in solidarity with SAYMCA.

Our lives have been disrupted and we understand the tremendous human, social, economic, and political costs in this terrible new era, which has made environments in which so many of you work and live, so much more difficult. As a youth movement, I urge all young people to take a positive role in assuring the safety of our communities through virtual awareness campaigns, prayers and spreading love to our neighbours. No one should hesitate to share with us, ideas on how we can be more helpful and effective in the assistance and cooperation that we provide to the communities. This crisis will end, and it is our profound hope that it ends soon.



Times of crisis give us a chance to redress the imbalances and to build stronger synergies for action. We can achieve much more by

communicating, planning and working together in partnership for the wellbeing of all humanity. Together side by side we can fight and conquer.

Your safety, as well as the safety of our partners, associates and friends, is of highest priority. Let our actions demonstrate a firm commitment as we continue monitoring and following the updates, recommendations and guidelines on essential preparatory and prevention measures in response to the pandemic. Let us all continue to follow and observe the latest advise, protection tips and

recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), our governments and local authorities in the countries that we operate in.

Thank you for all your efforts, and let us continue to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of humanity. My very best wishes for your good health and safety.

With undiminished solidarity.

**Gcinekile Masiye, National General Secretary,
Zimbabwe YMCA**

COVID19 YOUTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Nelson Mandela Bay YMCA joined forces with Harambee Youth Unemployment Accelerator, Solidarity Fund and other key partners to reach 3Million young people in 3Weeks during the coronavirus crisis to

share credible and accurate information with young people and their networks.

This has involved educational information around covid-19; government updates, advice on workplace readiness and tips on how to use technology for seeking for

work; preparation of CVs and interviews; different ways of accessing affordable data.

Young people feel safe when they have facts about the virus and know how to protect themselves. They want to know

who is recovering, not just who is dying. They want to know how to find work and stay busy.

The campaign has now reached 3,935,760 youth during lockdown through social media platforms, FB, WhatsApp, websites etc.

**The campaign
has now
reached
3,935,760 youth**

COVID-19: Adapt and Thrive can be accessed at no cost at funzi.mobi/learn/covid-19-adapt-and-thrive
More information on the **3Million 3Weeks** initiative can be found at www.3m3w.co.za/

SPRINGBOK WORLD CUP CAPTAIN gives support to YMCA initiative

During lockdown, a focus for the Nelson Mandela Bay YMCA has been to keep nurturing the kids and families of our Pre-School. We are providing them with nutritious meals during lockdown for their physical and cognitive health. Some of



these kids depend on us for a daily meal as there are struggles with high unemployment in the township. And what better way to provide a basic need and lift the spirits of families... than to receive a parcel from our #1 World Cup Rugby Captain, Siya Kolisi! I decided to contact the Kolisi Foundation to invite them to support us. They immediately came on board to provide 80 food parcels.



Siya and his wife Rachel delivered the parcels themselves and it was humbling to see their willingness and care. Parents being served by the Springbok Rugby Captain appreciated every moment of it. For me, as the General Secretary, it was an emotional rollercoaster as I saw the direct impact it had on those families. It was heart-warming as I realised that my efforts were not in vain. It was amazing!

The initiative will continue for the next 2 months with families receiving food parcels from the Kolisi Foundation in partnership with 67 Blankets for Mandela Day, Nelson Mandela Foundation, Ubuntu Pathways and Trek4Mandela Foundation.

Keeping our eye on the ball!

**Lerato Lebopo, General Secretary,
Nelson Mandela Bay YMCA**





MESSAGE FROM THE GLOBAL RACE in NORWAY

Left: Fredrik Glad Gjernes (Director of Y-Global) and Kristin Glad (Ronningen Folk High School Teacher)

gives me perspectives into my own life here in privileged Norway.

I just wanted to tell you that it seems like the Rønningen Folkehøgskole now is going to hit an all-time fundraising high for the Global Race in support of South Africa YMCA. We have been fundraising more than 300 000 Norwegian Krone and it's been a really good Global Race this year. I have also been walking

with my husband. In one day I did 41 kilometres and the last kilometres were so hard, but when I thought about you I was inspired to walk each next kilometre. I will never forget you and I hope we can meet again with a new class next year. For now...stay safe in quarantine. I wish you all the best, keep up the hope. We stand by you.

Kristin Glad/Ronningen Folk High School

Hi everyone

Thanks for the video clips that you sent. It was so good to see you again. I really miss you guys. It was nice to meet you at the workshop in Cape Flats and we were so happy to get to know you better. I have been to South Africa several times but every time I meet up with youth in the South Africa YMCA, it makes a big impression on me. Your willingness to share your challenges and also to share your hopes for the future really

LOOKING BEYOND LOCKDOWN IN THE SHELTERS

With such close collaboration between organisations working in the Pietermaritzburg homeless shelters, we have begun to think about linkages during lockdown and beyond. Our coordinating partner, KZNCC, has supported joint initiatives between YMCA, Youth for Christ and the Salvation Army. Together our planning has involved surveys with the homeless guests in the male and female shelters. Looking at skills development, this would probably cover trades from carpentry to beauty therapy.

We are assessing if there are some steps and

processes that could start during the shelter experience.

A huge aspect of our work in the last week has been on information sharing and education. There was a general understanding that they would leave the shelters on 30 April after the lifting of level 5 restrictions. This provided us with the opportunity to engage in lifeskills orientated discussions around their views and hopes.

Every day all day we learn together!

Phumla Khuzwayo, Youth Justice Coordinator, Pietermaritzburg YMCA

JUGGLING CONSTANT CHANGE

The Cape Flats YMCA continues with our home-based care, assistance with meds and chronic medication home deliveries. Monday we delivered 53 packets, with 9 of those being returned. Here is what Tuesday looked like in terms of screening and testing:

Households: 270

Screened: 868

Referred: 14

Households refusing screening: 6

Reasons for refusal are varied, from not understanding covid-19 or believing misinformation, to anxiety of what being positive means and then the fear of discrimination if you are tested positive.

With each challenge comes an opportunity

Life in the temporary shelters at Strandfontein has changed quite dramatically. Our role was to be part of the feeding for the homeless in one particular shelter, along with Oasis. At the beginning we were feeding 850 per day but this has gone down to 280 currently. Many have gone back to families, and others back to the streets. The city is slowly phasing this out and moving now to a winter readiness programme.

Organisations can apply to be considered to house these people during winter. This type of shelter arrangement has many challenges such as: criteria for placement, management of the

project, dealing with drugs which are readily available everywhere in the Cape Flats and the real possibility of homeless guests refusing to leave after the project ends.

With each challenge comes an opportunity and then another challenge associated with this opportunity. We focus on the future, we focus on the present and the moving targets in between!

We are learning new things every day that will enable us to respond better in the future.



During the month of April, in response to the COVID19 crisis, the YMCA reached the following numbers of people:

- at least 15,000 individuals for health issues, awareness campaigns
- has served about 35,000 meals and distributed 1000's of food packages
- provided direct support to over 250 homeless people
- housed 124 people who were unable to return to their homes

Inequality during Life in Lock down

It really does matter during the lockdown, whether you are in a single room apartment, a township, an overcrowded shack or a spacious house with a large garden. We are feeling varying degrees of loneliness, fear, desperation if your job is gone or perhaps in jeopardy. Or maybe our job is secure? Am I able to stockpile food, or not? Do I have a fibre optics data connection, an unstable 3G or nothing at all? The inequality of people in South Africa and across the globe is being exacerbated in this lockdown scenario. Yet the people we rely on most at this time are the ones who are on the wrong end of the inequality scale. The shop workers, nurses, street cleaners, care workers. To those who are on the better part of the inequality scale, do something for someone today. Do something that will make

Be full of Justice, Compassion and Humility

a difference to someones life. In desperate times such as these, the values of Christ that we as YMCA members confess, should manifest like a bright light in a dark sky. This is not the time to be politically correct or cautious in our approach to other people. This is a time for extreme compassion and kindness. Of course we should always extol such virtues, but perhaps this is a time for throwing caution to the wind. Just be kind. And compassionate. And don't forget to be humble. In the words of Micah the prophet who, in answer to a doubting Israel who could not discern the voice of God, simply said..." Be full of Justice, Compassion and Humility."

That's it people. It's not rocket science.

RUNNING APART, TOGETHER

Last week we reported that Kristin Glad and her group of students from Rønningen folkehøgskolel, Norway, were running the Global Race to raise funds for a focused approach to LAG masculinity next year, within the broader Youth Justice programme.

We were with them every step of the way, helping them to raise awareness during the innovative social distancing race this year. They sent us some amazing videos. One of them doing the run in the woods, another on a yellow unicycle! And a wonderful video from Kristin who covered an incredible amount of kilometres for the team.

This year the Rønningen group raised double the amount normally raised, for the YMCA for next year. We thank them so much for the experience we have had together this year. And what it means for us going forward this year and next.

Raising awareness, raising funds.

Raising the bar on global citizenship.



Ingrid, a student from Ronningen Folk School, rode her unicycle for 7 kms to raise funds for YMCA South Africa ... Thank You! You are all awesome!