

Newsletter Winter 2020



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2020 TfA General Update

At the end of March the corona crisis caused South Africa to go into a heavy lockdown. Everyone had to stay at home, people were not allowed to travel and companies had to be closed. Despite a vast reduction in corona cases nationwide from August onwards, the fact that the region is mostly focused on tourism meant it still heavily suffers. As a consequence, many people from townships in this region have either been fired, or if they were lucky were put on unpaid leave. Despite the lockdown having been lifted, people hardly have income and have it difficult making ends meet. Food shortages have been a real problem since lockdown instated and are still prevalent even with domestic tourism slowly coming back to Limpopo. Over the past few months Teachers for Africa have helped three churches in Phalaborwa and Bushbuck Ridge with providing cooked food for children on Sundays. Nevertheless, many challenges are still facing the region post-lockdown and Teachers for Africa is actively monitoring the situation trying to make a difference.

Concerning the foundation and its projects, schools have partially reopened from September and have been busy with, among others, issuing state exams to restore a sense of normalcy. Currently, our TfA paid tutors are still unable to coach any children in our Learner Support Centre. Instead, they help with monitoring corona safety procedures around the primary school. We vehemently hope that at the start of the new school year in January they are able to work with our kids in our Learner Support Centre again, as they have been doing for the last five years.

The disability (special needs) projects have also partially reopened. A large factor behind the reopening was personal safety equipment, such as thermometers, face shields and disinfectant. TfA has been able to sponsor this equipment, making reopening possible. We've also been fortunate to sponsor two educational events for parents of disabled children to talk about corona safety measures at home. Our coordinator Thandi has been the driving force behind those.



Parents getting education on corona measures



Furthermore, Teachers for Africa is proud to have funded the Seeking the Lost Sheep Ministry Church in Tekamahala, Bushbuckridge, in collaboration with an active sponsor from Minnesota, USA. The church essentially used to be a tent, with no walls and just a nylon roof. TfA helped to finance a sturdy wooden roof, and we are excited that the congregation of the church finished it by paying for and building the stone walls themselves. The church is now a safe haven where even in heavy storms or blistering suns people can come and worship.



The sponsored roof of the church



The result of the congregation's own building!



The team at disability project Khomanani, with protective equipment

At the end of June, we were told that corona had unfortunately reached Limpopo and even that around twenty people were infected in the township of Lulikani, Phalaborwa. Since mid-July, schools have reopened for Grade R, Grade 1 and Grade 6. TfA coordinator Thandi wanted to reopen disability projects Khomanani and Horisani, but needed hand sanitiser, face masks and a thermometer, supplies Teachers for Africa sponsored. Furthermore, these projects are currently working on growing a vegetable garden, so they can sell the produce for the benefit of the projects.

Unfortunately, at the moment we do not know what the future holds, but we stay active with supporting our different projects, and behind the scenes we are working on getting students and volunteers back to South Africa in the spring of 2021. Thank you for sticking with us!

The TfA Board



Tenth Anniversary of Teachers for Africa Foundation

We are very proud to have celebrated our tenth anniversary in December 2019. The event at ZO MOOIJ Art Gallery in Amsterdam was a big success with many familiar faces from over the years. We also organised a successful sponsor event where we auctioned off art that was donated by artists like Nico Koster, Arie Otten and Jan Sierhuis. We would like to thank you all for your commitment to Teachers for Africa, whether this was by giving sponsor material, financial or intangible support to the projects by volunteering. Without you, we would not be where we are today! Thanks to you we have been able to make a difference at school and projects in Cape Town and Phalaborwa where we keep making a difference in the lives of children in South Africa through support for good education!

However, to keep activities such as our special needs projects running, we still have to count on your support. So, if you feel called to support or sponsor these projects of Teachers for Africa, please make your contribution by donating to our Dutch bank account: **NL06 RABO 0111 6549 98** / Stichting Docenten voor Afrika. BIC code: RABONL2U, or our South African banking account: **62441566348** /

Teachers for Africa Foundation / FNB Branch Hout Bay.

See how you can contribute in other ways at www.docentenvoorafrika.nl



Malika van der Meer (left) and Myrna Molenaar (right)

Orientation Activities for College Students the Hague

Teachers for Africa proudly differentiates itself from other organisations by directly employing people from the local area as our project managers. In the Netherlands we have enthusiastic volunteers who help to inform and recruit students who are looking for a meaningful internship. Since the last news letter came out there have been multiple students from the Netherlands who have gone to South Africa. They stayed at a partner project around the Phalaborwa area. Later in this newsletter former intern Max tells a little more about his internship.

To inform students about the possibilities to fulfil their internship with us, Myrna Molema has been giving orientational lessons at different colleges like ROC Mondriaan and HALO, both in the Hague. Former TfA intern and student from ROC Mondriaan Malika van der Meer joined her to tell about her experiences during her internship in 2017. Hopefully the enthusiasm from Myrna and Malika spread around the interns-to-be. Due to the corona crisis the presentations in April were cancelled, though after lockdown was lifted, Anne van de Kamp (former intern) and Myrna represented Teachers for Africa online in October at other orientation events.

Special News on our TfA Overall Coordinator Thandi

Thandi Sambo, our general coordinator in Phalaborwa had a wonderful wedding day and looked beautiful with Pastor Foster.

We love to share this happiness with you and we wish Thandi and her newlywed husband all the best. Congratulations to both of you!



Thandi Sambo: Founder of Horisani project and working as a therapist for people with disabilities. Since June also overall coordinator for Teachers for Africa foundation.

Interviewing Sports Student Max about his Internship



How did you get to know Teachers for Africa?

For my CIOS sports college it is mandatory to do at least one internship during our studies. The schools provides with multiple different internship options, including international sports development. This is the thing I chose and asked around if there were any people with tips for me to go to a developing country. My teacher told me about Teachers for Africa being a good organisation and that many of his students before me had gone to South Africa with them. I contacted the organisation and had multiple good talks with them, which is why I chose them.

How was your experience with Teachers for Africa?

I experienced an organisation that is in close contact in the country itself with the school that I did my internship at. I expected a lot of support in my first week. It is obviously very exciting to go to a country all by yourself, to an environment that is lacking behind compared to countries in Europe for example. I was received and guided very well, something I thank the organisation for.

When were you in South Africa and how do you look back on it as an intern?

I was in South Africa for five weeks, I went there in July 2019 and came back mid-August. I look back on it as one of the most special jurnies I've ever taken. Few travels in the future will trump this, that's for sure. I went there with an open mindset, I did not exactly know what to expect. After the corona period I would love to return to see everyone again, because I miss it so much! All those happy kids around me every day, I really want to return.

What do you miss most about your period in South Africa?

What I miss most are the happy faces of everyone, every day! It didn't matter what took place on a day, everyone was always happy and always wanted to have fun with each other. Besides that I also miss all the fanatic African kids, mostly in the townships. We always went there on Thursdays. We took a ball with us and played football with them. I will never forget that.

Were there things that you missed from the Netherlands while you were there?

For four weeks I really did not miss much. I had so much distraction by all the great things around me. The last week though, when I realised I was almost going back again, I started to miss my parents and was very happy to see them again. Other than that I really did not miss a lot from the Netherlands.

What did you learn from the experience, personally as well study related?

Personally I learned that you have to enjoy every moment of the day, and that you have to show a big smile as much as you can. Furthermore, I never throw away leftover food anymore. I noticed that people in Africa eat food that is difficult to comprehend for someone like me, such as eating foods with gravel on it, simply because they do not have money to buy something else if they dropped it on the ground. Study-wise, I learned that you have to be very direct with the pupils. You notice they are so happy, but because of that they really try to test you how far they can go in the first two weeks. In a nice way of course, but you do have to show your boundaries sometimes.

How did you finish your internship and what are you doing now?

I finished my internship at school in the Netherlands by doing assignments about Africa, about what I experienced, etc. In my second year of CIOS I went to South Africa, passed the internship course and I'm now in my third year. Furthermore I work in a restaurant, but I would certainly like to do volunteer work in Africa for a longer period of time!



Work Visit Chairman Gerard to Phalaborwa

About a year ago our chair Gerard Dam went to evaluate our projects in South Africa. We got a lot of helpful feedback from his reporting for the continuation of our projects.

"The visit was planned at the last-minute, but turned out to be very valuable. Firstly because of meeting Thabane, a student we have been sponsoring for three years, which was very special, but also because of

him showing us TFA's roots in Hout Bay, Cape Town. After getting to meet Thabane, he gave me a tour around Hout Bay's township, Imizamo Yethu. First he took me to a day care, which was formerly used as TFA's homework centre. Afterwards we went to the first Learner Support Centre that TFA opened, at Hout Bay Secondary School. Unfortunately the principal did not have time to talk to us, but we were allowed to take a tour of the school.

Two days later, after travelling to Phalaborwa from Cape Town, I went to Frangipani Special Needs School together with TFA overall coordinator Thandi. This was also the first time I ever met Thandi. During the visit Thandi did some exercises with the kids. These are physiotherapy exercises to, among others, stimulate blood flow and to prevent pain and to improve mobility. Because there is not a report available for every child about its condition, sometimes it is quite difficult to provide the right type of care. Giving these individual exercises in a separate room are thus very valuable and cost Thandi about an hour and a half of her time. Exercises are done every Monday and Friday.

The next day Pinky, coordinator of the Phalaborwa Soccer Foundation, had organised a football tournament together with the stream guides and coordinators for my arrival. The tournament would start at 10:00 but eventually got underway at 11:30. Eventually it got so hot that matches were shortened to twenty minutes. The tournament was concluded by a prizegiving and I was asked to hand the prizes (new team kits) to the best team in their particular age group.

Next day, special needs day! We started by visiting Thandi's special needs projects Horisani and Khomanani. The highlight of the visit was directly on arrival: former learner Nwgazi of Frangipani, who got displaced to a regular primary school due to cost issues, had started at Khomanani since one week. That's fantastic news, as this boy needs special attention, which he finally gets at this fantastic disability project.

My visit was very valuable and meant that our board has been able to make several helpful decisions this year, especially as the pandemic has meant our yearly visit has not been able to take place in 2020."

- Gerard Dam, TFA chairman and former project coordinator in Phalaborwa

We welcome any Christmas donations! Please support us by giving generously to our projects.

Netherlands bank account: NL06 RABO 0111 6549 98 / Stichting Docenten voor Afrika. BIC code: RABONL2U

[Thank you for your support. On behalf of our board we wish you a Merry Christmas!](#)



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