

Report from the Good Neighbour Nutritional Outreach Program, South Africa (November 2005)

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The Outreach Program will be taking a different shape over the next 4 - 6 month cycle, with the emphasis on a system that is simple and easy to manage, yet still lets us track and account for all the money spent on the project.

The supply of Soya soupmix and maize meal has to date been coordinated by Hooper's Soya in Jeppe, Johannesburg. They have been a great source of help and assisted in so many ways to ensure the success of the Feeding Programs in the Cleveland/ Denver areas. Hooper's has, however, recently sold their business to new management. I have therefore approached the local Spar group, a large supermarket chain, to request that they supply the project for the next 4-6 months. I am sure that Charlotte will remember that, when she last visited the school in the informal settlement in Denver, the children were being fed bread with the Soya soupmix before we moved over to maize meal. Spar Bakery was the supplier of the bread at that time. Spar is ideally positioned in the area and has offered various added benefits that a large company can offer which will make coordinating the Outreach Program so much easier for my small office to run.

As we have discussed, it is currently necessary for me to place my day-to-day focus on the commercial dealings of the Trade plus Aid Design Studio workshop. This is where I need to spend the majority of my time as the ever-mounting bills need to be paid. Doing the exercise of accounting for the time I currently allocate to the running of the Trade plus Aid Outreach Program and the costs involved has made me aware of the need to develop the system so that fewer demands are made on my time, yet the people in need in the area still receive what it is that we can help them with. To this end, we will now be concentrating on assisting the following projects over the next period of time:

Informal Settlement in Cleveland, Johannesburg.

This settlement is home to many people who have migrated from the rural areas of KwaZulu Natal to the urban area surrounding the Johannesburg city centre. As most left their homes due to the violence in their area and the search for jobs most are living in very difficult conditions with minimal income. With the help of the local Induna, we have been able to continue the Outreach Program with consistency and a level of control that has ensured that the people that really need the help are receiving it. Two ladies from the settlement cook food on an open fire 3 times a week.



Cleveland Informal Settlement



Preparing the food at Cleveland Informal Settlement

Trauma Unit South African Police Station - Cleveland

The Trauma Unit is the police's own outreach program and is an ideal way to safely identify the neediest in the area. Food is collected from our workshop on a Friday morning and broken down into packets. These packets are distributed to the elderly and infirm in the area, as well as numerous child-run households. We are one of a few donors to this program in the area and the people running it on a volunteer basis are doing a great job under difficult circumstances.

School, Denver Informal Settlement

We have continued to assist this school in the Denver Informal Settlement, despite the poor results of the students in the year-end exams. Once again we hope that the marks will improve which will get the school onto a government grant system and relieve the 100% dependence on donations of this kind to run the school. To be honest, I don't hold out much hope but cannot justify stopping the feeding of the babies and younger children just because the older students are struggling to get their marks up to an acceptable pass rate.

Impilo - Place of Safety Orange Grove.

I have become rather involved in this project, assisting in the care of abandoned babies. We help with formula and maize meal and I am often in the police station in the early hours of the morning working with the Child Protection Unit to ensure that a place of safety is made available to babies as and when it is needed.

The Central Methodist Church Jhb - Outreach Programme

A group of volunteers from this Church in central Johannesburg go out onto the City streets, twice a week, and supply 1,200 meals a night to the people living on the streets. These people are mainly "illegal" immigrants, who have come to South Africa from North of our borders. Many of these people cannot get refugee status and therefore cannot share in the "system". We supply all the maize and Soya required for the support of this project.

FLOC - (For the LOVE of Children)

This project is also run by the Central Methodist Church and it provides daily shelter for children of single parents, while the parents either look for or go to work during the day. We supply maize and Soya for the ± 160 children that are looked after on a daily basis.

Twilight Children

A shelter for street children in the Berea, Hillbrow area of Johannesburg. We are supplying the maize and Soya for 150 meals per day, 5 times per week. Reliable and well-run.

These projects can all be run from my office in Cleveland with the help of the Spar group.