



24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## SAEP IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

### A letter from the Director

Dear Partners, Donors, Supporters, Beneficiaries, and Friends,

South Africa is now in a 'State of Disaster' in response to the Coronavirus epidemic and we go into lock down as of Thursday midnight. The SAEP Board and I are focused on responding promptly and responsibly to staff, beneficiaries, and the communities we serve in this time of local, national, and global crisis which is constantly changing.

**Our goal: to help contain the virus by taking proactive measures in accordance with WHO and South African government guidelines and directives, while keeping contact with our beneficiaries and educating them about how to keep safe.** This is challenging, given the wide range of disruptions to the services we provide, especially with the mandatory closing of all Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres and schools.

While we understand the need for drastic action to slow the spread of the virus, we are also deeply concerned about the safety of children and young people in the townships where it is very difficult to keep physical distance and to self-isolate if necessary, given the overcrowded conditions most have to live under.

Our partner Beautiful Gate, where our offices in Philippi Township are housed, has put out a call to their supporters to **Partner, Pray, Prevent, Protect and Provide**. We ask you to support us in a similar way.

Now that we can no longer have direct contact with our beneficiaries we are keeping in touch via social media and educating them about how to protect themselves from the virus.

All staff will be working from home as of Friday, if not sooner. We have had to supply some with laptops and others with data and airtime to enable this to happen.

Within resource constraints, we are working to make available educational materials and resources on line for our Bridging Year students who have only just started the year with us.

**In all these efforts SAEP NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT, now more than ever!**

This is a whole new education and development ball game for SAEP as for all small non-profits. We cannot anticipate all future needs since we are still in the early days, without any certainty about impacts of the epidemic on SAEP or the communities we serve.

**But SAEP has survived and thrived in 25 years of uncertainty and dramatic change in South Africa. We will, with your support, survive and thrive as we enter the next 25.**

We believe that our programmes are needed more than ever at this time, and will be in the aftermath of the disaster. Please help us however you can:

- **Stay engaged with us and volunteer to assist remotely**
- **Continue and increase your financial support for SAEP.** We predict that public funds will be directed to health services and mitigation of the social effect of the pandemic so that our education and youth development programmes will desperately need funds when schools reopen to ensure that learners and students make up the time lost. **Please donate now to our programmes - <https://www.saep.org/donate>**

We will shortly be sending you a newsletter about all the exciting developments in programmes this year before the virus hit us. We will also post regular updates on how Covid-19 is being contained and how it is affecting all of SAEP.

With many thanks for your support, and warm regards from all the SAEP Board, staff, and beneficiaries,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Keen', written in a cursive style.

Jane Keen

Director