



Israel Mqingwana
HEAD OF HUMAN CAPITAL

The coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown has had a devastating impact on the lives of many South Africans. Yet amidst all the distress and hardship, it's heartening to see how so many ordinary South Africans have rallied together to help those most in need.

At Prudential, we feel immensely fortunate to have been in a position to help various organisations with their relief campaigns. The company, guided by our Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Committee, has helped fund projects run by our CSI partners, the South African Education Project

(SAEP) and Fun Learning for Youth (FLY), as well as several other smaller community outreach programmes in the past few months. We're also very pleased that our majority shareholder and offshore partner, M&G plc, has also come on board, offering financial aid for programmes run by Children Aloud and LEAP Science and Maths School, both of whom are doing fantastic work within their respective communities.

While we are happy to be able to do our part as a company to help mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, it is arguably the

efforts of our staff in their individual capacities that we are most proud of. Their acts of kindness embody the spirit of “ubuntu” and nation building, which we believe are worth sharing in times like these – a time when stories of positivity and encouragement are much needed.

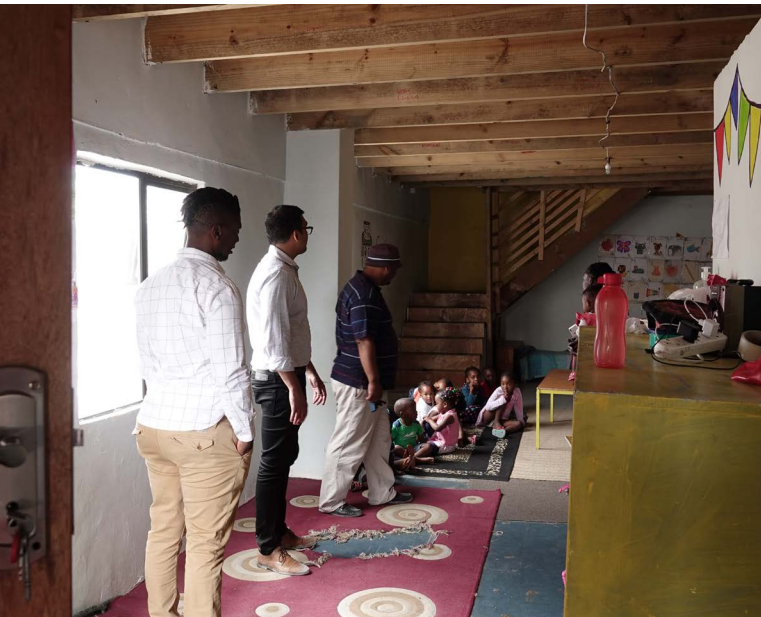
Delivering food and essentials in informal settlements

Our first story takes place in the informal settlements of Manenberg, Kewtown and Belgravia. Prior to the lockdown, Jason Mashonga, together with members of his non-profit organisation, Positive Youth Development (PYD), would typically run a soup kitchen three times a week. However, as social distancing measures limited the extent to which they could effectively dispense food from a central location, they began creating food parcels and delivering them directly to households within these areas. Recognising the need for basic essentials, Jason and his team began collecting clothes, toiletries, sanitizers and masks and including them as part of their care packages. These packages served as a life-line for many families, especially for those

who relied on the soup kitchen as their primary source of a warm meal. Needless to say, Jason and his team went above and beyond to assist those who so desperately needed a helping hand.

Sewing and giving away masks

Masks have become essential in preventing the transmission of the Coronavirus. Mandy Wright, a member of Prudential’s Johannesburg-based team, recognised not only the importance of having a mask, but also that not everyone is able to afford one. Her story began out of concern for the security guards in her complex who were using public transport to travel to and from work without any form of personal protective equipment. She took it upon herself to make them masks, putting her formal training in fashion design to good use. Recognising that she had the ability to help more people, she soon started making more masks and distributing them to anyone who was in need, free of charge. Where people were in a position to pay, she took the money that she received and passed it on to those who were in need in the form of a donation.



She also started giving the ladies who she helped small quantities to sell so that they could generate additional income. Mandy went from creating just a handful of masks out of concern for those around her, to making and distributing 40 masks each weekend.

Organising neighbourhood watch to fund and distribute food

Crime is unfortunately an all-too-real concern in South Africa. Many areas have a neighbourhood watch set up to provide additional security and to act as a visible deterrent for would-be criminals. Under lockdown, however, most criminals were indoors, and neighbourhood watch teams were limited in their ability to operate. But instead of sitting around idly, Valda

Clark organised a group of ladies from the Allenby neighbourhood watch and started a drive to collect food donations from the broader community. She used the neighbourhood watch network to identify those in need and managed to distribute food parcels to families as far as Grassy Park and Lotus River. Although donations have started to decrease over time, Valda and her team continue to support community food distribution centres in Sea Winds, Hillview and Sheridan Park.

These are just three stories out of many where Prudential staff have sacrificed not only their time but also their finances to help those less fortunate. While we are certainly proud of the work that they have done, we also

recognise and take encouragement from the many stories like these that have emerged from other parts of the country, and the world.

In spite of the many challenges that have surfaced as a result of the widespread impact of the pandemic, a silver lining has undoubtedly been the extent to which people have selflessly banded together to help one another. Our hope is that as we move closer to finding a vaccine to curb this virus, and life in general begins to normalise, that the new-found compassion and

empathy we have towards each other may remain with us.

As a concluding thought, we echo the words of Nelson Mandela who said: ***“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”*** ■

Israel joined Prudential in 2018 as Head of Human Capital. He is responsible for attracting new talent, developing Prudential's staff and fostering a professional and supportive corporate culture. Prior to joining Prudential, Israel worked in a variety of human resources and organisational development roles for some of the country's leading multinationals, such as Unilever and SAB Miller. He also held executive roles at RCL Foods, SC Johnson and more recently Sodia Consulting. Israel holds a B.A. (Honours) degree in Industrial Psychology and Industrial Sociology from Rhodes University.