



**THREE2SIX**  
Refugee Children's Education Project

Friends of  
Three2Six  
Newsletter

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**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020**

**NEWSLETTER**

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## A letter from the Director's desk

Dear Friends and Supporters

2020 has been a very difficult year for all, and especially for our children and their families. They were left particularly vulnerable due to the financial impact of COVID-19 measures. We had to offer support during this time from food aid, to masks and sanitizers, and distance educational support.

From a numbers perspective our COVID-19 response looked as follows:

- R298 750 worth of food vouchers distributed to families and teachers
- 1 659 food parcels distributed to families (value around R829 500)
- 1 975 liters of medical-grade hand sanitizers distributed to families and teachers
- 1 125 masks distributed to children
- 1 125 soaps distributed to families
- 450 masks distributed to families
- 225 workbook packs distributed to children during lock-down.

These interventions helped families get by during these extremely challenging times. We also made sure that our education pro

gramme remained almost uninterrupted throughout lockdown. With additional days and extra hours, we were able to successfully complete the year.

With all the precautions taken, we are pleased that none of our children or staff were infected with the virus.

After some consultation we decided not to exit most children from the project, and we will keep them in the project for an additional year while progressing to the next grade. This decision was made in response to the 18% drop out in the public system this year, and the shortage of space. This will allow us to strengthen their preparation to enter public schools in 2022 when placement is likely to be easier.

We couldn't have achieved what we have without your generous support. We are most grateful. I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a safe and enjoyable Festive Season.

Yours faithfully

Mark Potterton  
Three2Six Director

### Donations to beneficiaries



In November, the project once again distributed masks to each of its learners which were purchased from the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE).

Also in November, on the 14th, our team members from our three campuses organized the last food distribution of the year which was eagerly anticipated by our parents. These hampers contained much needed food and hygiene items.

### Turquoise Harmony Institute visit to the project

November 6th saw the Turquoise Harmony Institute visit our Sacred Heart College campus bringing along some scrumptious muffins for our children. The aim of their visit was to interview our director on the impact of the parents' English classes on the Project.



Last year, the Institute started holding regular English classes for a group of our parents to support their inclusion into South African society. The idea being that this would also increase their employability in the country. This year, the sessions were unfortunately interrupted because of lockdown, but we were thrilled that they could resume in November via WhatsApp.

## Teacher training

On 26 November, our teaching staff came together for the last training of the year which was organized by our director. It was a good opportunity to reflect on the year's achievements in spite of the difficulties, and to forge ahead for the year to come.

Language therapist and remedial expert, Aneene Dawber facilitated a session on literacy teaching, giving our teachers tools to strengthen their skills in this field, thereby providing support to improve the quality of the education provided by the project.



An expert from the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE), who earlier this year observed social interactions between our children, also joined our training to reflect on the findings of this evaluation. These focused on everyday care and presence, and he made suggestions on how to reinforce them during the time we have available with our learners each day.

We also had a fruitful group discussion on how the project reinforces the ethos of Marist schools in various aspects such as its teaching and the relationship with the children.

## Vegetable garden at our Sacred Heart Campus

As reported in our last newsletter, we have recently rehabilitated our vegetable garden at our Sacred Heart College campus, sharing the harvest with the most needy families. A former Three2Six parent is currently reorganizing the garden, making it more accessible to the children. Our aim is for them to take ownership of the project, forging a sense of responsibility for the planting and harvesting.

## Last alumni day of the year



On the 5th of December, we were able to host our final Alumni day for 2020. It has been an immensely difficult year for our Alumni, and due to our volunteers having to return to their home countries, we are short staffed. Joined by Randry – an Alumni himself, now working for the project – we began discussions around personal leadership to prepare the group for the volunteer work that they would be doing in the coming week at the Holiday Programme. Unfortunately it was a rainy day, limiting our usual outdoor activities to a soccer game.

We read and discussed excerpts from the 'The Four Quartets' poem which was given to us by Br. Mario, one of Sacred Heart College's resident brothers. We distilled meaning, with the Alumni presenting incredibly subtle and advanced understandings of the passages. This is an activity that we will repeat next year, and we will perhaps begin writing our own poetry.

We wish the Alumni all the best for the holiday period, and look forward to seeing them all again in early January.

## Partnership with Play Africa



Over the last few weeks, the project has partnered with Play Africa on its 7-month "Heal & Connect" programme. This offers support to some of its Observatory Girls' campus parents and guardians to help children's healing during the current crisis, through play and other activities. An additional aim of this programme is to build COVID-19 awareness. This programme allows families to focus on healing, connecting and developing new resilience for the future.

Initially, the Play Africa team reached out to our parents to find out how best they could assist them during this time and to offer them psychological support. They then organized several connect sessions with our parents focusing on self-care strategies, play in crisis, economic empowerment and disability sensitization. The team also shared helpful information with our caregivers on COVID-19 related issues, links to services, and other topics around the sessions held.

In early December, the parents who agreed to take part in this initiative received a play parcel to use at home with their children. The programme will continue early next year.

## Advocacy update

Webinar



**Franciscans International**  
A voice at the United Nations



On the 26th of November, our director was a speaker at a webinar organized by Franciscans International in partnership with our funder MISEAN CARA.

This event marked the launch of Franciscans International's publication "Tearing down the walls" which challenges myths around migration. Several international experts working in the migration field shared their varied grassroots experiences. Our director also presented our project to the panel and viewers, explained how COVID-19 impacted the project and how we adapted our activities accordingly.

If you have missed it, here is the link to the recording of the event:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEJXB\\_EDr2c&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEJXB_EDr2c&feature=youtu.be)

Also in November, the project participated in an initiative by the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA). This was part of the 41-month project previously mentioned which aims at ensuring that children and youth in migration know how to claim their rights, enjoy inclusive policies and access to basic services.

Three2Six provided the Consortium with feedback on a training manual that they are developing for social workers and school administrators who engage with migrant children. The manual is developed in partnership with a researcher from the University of the Witwatersrand.

## Partnerships with Lawyers for Human Rights

LAWYERS FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS

Early November, Three2Six and Lawyers for Human Rights started a new partnership to fight for belonging for all, and for the eradication of statelessness through the establishment of a national network for the eradication of statelessness in South Africa.

The project will kick off next year once a strong network has been built. Advocacy activities will be implemented in which various actors will be engaged, including Parliament. More on this next year!

In December, insight into the challenges that forced displaced children and youth face when accessing services such as education and health care in South Africa, were shared with a team from Lawyers for Human Rights. This forms part of a baseline assessment carried out by Lawyers for Human Rights in partnership with Terre des Hommes, which will inform their upcoming advocacy and litigation activities.

## Holiday programme



Following 2020, more than ever, the children needed a few days to decompress and to have fun with their friends after a particularly difficult and stressful year.

Unlike other years, due to COVID, we had a shorter holiday programme that ran on two campuses instead of one as a way to separate the children into smaller groups. We also did not have any international volunteers given the current limitations.

Despite this, between the 7th and the 11th of December, with local volunteers including some Three2Six alumni, our team helped run enjoyable

activities for the children for our annual December holiday programme. In partnership with our funder, Terre des Hommes, and to celebrate Global Action Month 2020, we held activities around the protection of the environment. Our children planted trees at our Observatory Girls' Primary School campus and visited the Siyakhana food garden in their community, where they learnt about planting, transplanting, irrigating, weed control, before leaving with their own seedling to grow at home. We also organized science lessons about the pollution of the environment.

Our week also included a fun and active camp day on each campus with the Justfootprints Foundation, no contact judo with our partner Judo for peace, storytelling sessions with Drama for Life from the University of the Witwatersrand, an online Hooked on books show to encourage reading, a sports day, craft activities such as beading, collage and painting, board game sessions, a visit to the Bunny Haven in our community and to the Johannesburg zoo, drumming lessons and other playful activities.



The Sacred Heart College nurse joined two of our assemblies to remind our children and team on the necessary precautions to take throughout the holiday programme due to COVID.

Lizette Cressey visited us again and very kindly took beautiful pictures of our children having a ball during the programme.

Thank you so much to all our volunteers and team for a week full of enthusiasm, love and laughter, and to our generous funders for making this possible for our children!

## Fundraising update

This year has been an incredibly difficult year for many of our learners and their families due to the loss of income during the pandemic and the inability to make ends meet. The project has, however, managed to continue to provide aid by providing food support and quality bridging education to the children across all the campuses.

Although many partners could not have the usual project visits due to the restrictions on movement, we would like to thank you all for taking the time to e-meet with us and hear our stories, it is always great to hear back from our partners on new exciting ventures and how we can improve our outcomes and better serve our community.

It is with the generous support of all our partners that even during these difficult times, we are still able to deliver on the set targets for the year. We extend our gratitude to all our partners, volunteers, friends and families who have consistently provided support towards the Three2six Refugee Children's Educational Project.

Exciting news

This month we would like to thank the following partners for their contributions:

- Terre des hommes
- Caring Women's Forum

*Thank you for all you do for our kids. You are a part of their lives too.*

If you would like to send us a Christmas donation, please get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

Best wishes

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