Crowdfunding support spikes as SA rallies to fight Covid-19 pandemic

As South approaches its peak in the Covid-19 pandemic, South Africans have been rallying to provide relief to vulnerable communities. Apart from countless donations, resources and time being given to local organisations and other relief initiatives, individuals have also used online crowdfunding platforms to raise funds for those in need.

Leana de Beer, CEO of Feenix

Crowdfunding platforms such as Feenix, Thundafund, Uprise Africa, Jumpstarter Crowdfunding and BackaBuddy have all seen an increase on their platforms since the announcement of the nationwide lockdown.

Feenix, a crowdfunding platform connecting funders to tertiary students to help pay their fees and settle study debts, saw over a 200% increase in the number of new individual funder registrations and a 155% increase in individual donations on their platform and for their #CapTheGap Covid-19 Relief Fund campaign.

"The very existence of these crowdfunding initiatives speaks to the principles of social responsibility and compassion at a time when South African businesses and individuals are facing a great deal of uncertainty and fear," says Leana de Beer, CEO of Feenix. "The success of these campaigns is an example of how the power of crowdfunding can be harnessed to deliver a greater good for all."

#BizUnity: Crowdsourcing campaign launched for 2020 National Arts Festival featured artist Madosini

Ruth Cooper 13 Jul 2020

#CapTheGap Response Fund

In a move to close the digital gap for university students during the lockdown, Feenix launched its own #CapTheGap Response Fund. The fund was launched to raise R6.6m to provide laptops, data and food vouchers to assist final year and

post-graduate university students in completing their studies. A total of R 3.1m has already been raised by corporates and individuals, and 294 students have been assisted so far.

Apart from Feenix, other online crowdfunding and charity platforms have also seen a similar spike in individuals setting up relief fundraising campaigns for those in need. BackaBuddy saw a 32% increase in the number of campaign submissions and a 72% increase in the number of individual donations on their platform. Another online charity organisation, GivenGain, saw donations climb by more than 60% year-on-year since 1 April.

While many notable organisations have been lauded for their crowdfunding efforts, including the Gift of the Givers raising almost R2m to help support frontline medical worker efforts, countless individuals have started their own fundraising campaigns to help those in need. Among those is Lauren Juries, a domestic worker based in Cape Town, who has managed to raise more than R60,000 for those in need.

GivenGain highlights the power of online fundraising during lockdown and beyond
23 Jun 2020

Right to education

De Beer believes that part of what makes crowdfunding so successful is that it is a collective effort towards a cause that everyone believes in that can make a big difference. "At Feenix, we are passionately invested in the right of access to education for students, which we believe should not be dependent on wealth. With the support of corporates, SMME businesses and individuals, we have raised a total of R39.52m, which has positively affected the lives of 1,181 students."

She explains that a donor's trust is built by ensuring that they have a unique and in-depth insight into the need for the cause. "We establish credibility by providing frequent updates and progress reports, so that funders are able to track the results of what they are investing in."

"The success of crowdfunding proves that South Africans are stronger together and that there is so much more that unites us than divides us. Now more than ever, through mobile phones and laptops, everyone can play their part in rebuilding our economy," adds de Beer.