

This Valentine's Day it's about more than chocolate hearts - it's about really giving your heart away

By [Brandon Garbutt](#), issued by [Capital Legacy](#)

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Brandon Garbutt

This Valentine's Day, when you're running around last minute buying over-priced red roses and foil-wrapped, heart-shaped chocolates to show your loved ones you haven't forgotten about them, stop for a moment and consider what it means to really give your heart away to someone who is literally dying waiting for it.

In South Africa, organ donation is greatly misunderstood and, for that reason, avoided. This has resulted in a heart-breaking shortage of registered donors. Thousands of people who desperately need an organ transplant, sit on a waiting list, with many passing away without a suitable donor being found.

There are only 300,000 registered organ donors in South Africa – that is less than 1% of the national population. With a population of 57 million people, we need closer to 3 million registered donors to meet the demand of patients who need organ transplants. Compare that to countries like the USA where more than 50% of the population is registered as organ donors, or the UK where it's compulsory unless you choose to opt-out. From these statistics, it's clear to see why there is a need for increased awareness in SA and, as a non-profit organisation, the Organ Donor Foundation relies on relationships with corporates and other bodies to further their message.

"It's important to think about what legacy you wish to leave behind, not only for your family, but for other families too."

At Capital Legacy our ethos of "leaving a legacy" underpins all our operations and partnerships and it was a natural fit to join forces with the Organ Donor Foundation (ODF). After all - what better way for us to help more people leave a lasting legacy than by helping an organisation that literally changes people's lives.

With legacy in mind, and as one of the leading providers of Wills in South Africa, we present every new client of ours with an opportunity to become a registered organ donor when we are drafting their Will.

We are so passionate about this cause that over the last three years, we have helped grow the ODF's membership by nearly 50,000 members. Last month alone, we helped register 1091 new organ donors with the ODF. We have also raised over R700,000 to fund the ODF's business operations and educational efforts and we are humbled to be part of their incredible mission.

"Our primary objective is to promote awareness of life-saving organ transplants. Our partnership with Capital Legacy has aided our awareness and educational campaigns as well as contributed to crucial Donor Database growth." - *Samantha Nicholls, CEO of ODF*

An organ transplant can completely change the recipient's life, as was the case with Tina 'B'. "10 years ago, I received a heart and bi-lateral lung transplant. My life has completely changed. I have gone from sleeping 18 to 20 hours a day, being wheelchair-bound when I wanted to go out, being on oxygen 24/7 and not having much of a life at all – to being able to take part in the Argus cycle race and becoming a business owner."

It's important to think about what legacy you wish to leave behind, not only for your family, but for other families too.

“It costs nothing to give your heart away and leave a lasting legacy this Valentine’s Day.”

Outlining your final wishes in your Will and noting your decision to become an organ donor not only helps your family understand how you want your Estate to be distributed, but also helps them make peace with their loss and your decision to profoundly impact the lives of complete strangers in need.

When thinking about the legacy you want to leave, you suddenly realise it's more than just assets and “stuff” that you leave behind. It's actually more about the memories, principles and impact you have on people's lives. It's about how you lived and what survives beyond you. What better legacy than to offer someone else a second chance at life.

It costs nothing to give your heart away and leave a lasting legacy this Valentine's Day.

To register as an organ donor and find out more about Organ Donor Foundation and the many lives they have helped save, visit: www.odf.org.za or visit www.capitallegacy.co.za for a Will consultation and register as an organ donor while you're at it!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brandon Garbutt is the managing director of Capital Legacy.

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