

Victor Daitz Foundation, Zero2Five Trust collaborate on school holiday meals programme

Following the announcement of school closures and the lockdown in March 2020, the Durban-based Zero2Five team, which provides nutritional and educational support to children attending more than 400 under-resourced early childhood development (ECD) centres in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, restructured its centre-based feeding scheme.



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As with many other civil society organisations, the pandemic demanded that Zero2Five adapt to implement disaster relief efforts. The organisation's agility and ability to collaborate enabled it to continue providing nutritional support throughout lockdown and across the border into the Eastern Cape. Since August 2020, the team is back to supporting ECD centres to re-open and deliver its usual nutritional support and implementing more WASH (water, health and sanitation) components in its ECD programme. It became evident very quickly that the nutrition status of many children was not optimal after their return from the long lockdown and the December holidays came far too quickly to achieve a measurable improvement.

"The six weeks of December holidays present a huge food security problem for millions of South African children who are depending on school meals and in 2020, this applied multifold. What a great call from our partner organisation, the Victor Daitz Foundation, to set a big bundle of funds aside, specifically for filling the school meal gap with nutritious meals," said Julika Falconer of Zero2Five.

Fortified breakfast porridges

The massive relief operation of 36 tonnes of fortified breakfast porridges started in the first week of December and will be completed on Friday, 15 January. The total food relief will translate into 720,000 meals. Pietermaritzburg-based Truda Foods assisted with subsidised rates for the food and transported the goods across KZN to central distribution points in the uThukhela, Illemba, Kind Cetshwayo, uMgungundlovu Districts and the Outer West in eThekweni. From there, the Zero2Five bakkie took it to rural ECD centres for the children to take home.

Says Brian Moshal, managing trustee of the Victor Daitz Foundation: “At the end of 2020, our board decided that something had to be done to ameliorate the ravages of the Covid-19 plague. What better than to call Julika Falconer from the Zero2Five Trust to equitably distribute fortified food to the most vulnerable in our KwaZulu-Natal communities. We are truly thankful to the Zero2Five Trust for the enormous effort they have put into making this project successful.”

For more info, go to Zero2five.org.za.

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