



PRO BONO CASE STUDY

Pro Bono: Communicating During a Pandemic - South African Solidarity Fund

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a devastating effect on South African citizens. In March 2020, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa called for the creation of The South African Solidarity Fund ("Solidarity Fund") to unite the nation's response to the crisis. A public benefit initiative and nonprofit organization, the Solidarity Fund supported South Africa's health response, including supplying personal protective equipment ("PPE") and supporting humanitarian efforts.

SITUATION

With the establishment of the Solidarity Fund, there was a clear and immediate need to communicate to the public using the fund as a voice of reassurance and support. A team of professionals in FTI Consulting's Strategic Communications segment across Johannesburg and Cape Town, led by Managing Director Max Gebhardt, engaged immediately with the leadership team and board to provide pro bono strategic communications expertise and tactical execution to support its launch across the region.

OUR ROLE

From March through December 2020, FTI Consulting oversaw the Solidarity Fund’s press office. The team’s activities included public relations and crisis issues management, as well securing media coverage and organizing interviews for the Solidarity Fund’s CEO and members of the Board.

OUR IMPACT



FTI Consulting professionals contributed over 560 hours of pro bono service for the project, facilitating higher donations that helped secure surgical and N95 masks required by local healthcare workers. The fundraising, run by a high-profile investment bank, has raised USD\$250 million through private business, enabling the Solidarity Fund to deliver over 280,000 food parcels to households in need.

“Working on the Solidarity Fund through the COVID-19 crisis has been very high profile, but more importantly has felt so worthwhile and has been a lot of fun for the team. It has provided important insights of what’s happening with COVID-19 in a developing country like South Africa.”

Max Gebhardt

Managing Director, Strategic Communications,
Johannesburg