

Gift of the Givers Responds to Riots and Looting in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng.

Context of Disaster

To fulfil their selfish, egoistic, political, self-centred agenda they instigated public disorder of a most despicable nature, eroding race relationships, glorifying looting, destroying livelihoods, putting at peril the jobs of thousands of our people, attacking ambulances, clinics, pharmaceutical manufacturing and wholesale companies, pharmacies and medical practices, denying passage of doctors, nurses and health care workers to medical facilities resulting in hunger, lack of oxygen and total patient care and possible numerous deaths. Their inhuman activity has robbed babies of formula milk, whilst the elderly and the physically challenged, orphanages and ordinary civilians of all economic strata have been denied access to basic foods and medical supplies. Severely ill Covid-19 patients have been prevented access to medical facilities by these traitors who have blood of our people on their hands. Fuel for ambulances, police vehicles and for front line personnel has run out crippling emergency services. But this is South Africa, a nation of Ubuntu, resilience, heart and ethics, qualities foreign to the instigators and planners of the nefarious actions pitting our people against each other aiming to tear our communities apart, whilst they go ahead and do the real looting, of capturing this country for themselves, their families and their backers. But this IS South Africa where resilience, Ubuntu and ethics triumphed against evil, injustice and immorality. Social activism and civic responsibility triumphed, where our citizens banded together to protect, defend and unify our communities that our government and leadership has failed spectacularly. The taxi association, community organisations, responsible leaders and rational thinkers who love this country and all its people made their voices loud unequivocally. Instead of tearing us apart, the traitors united us more strongly there before, we are brothers and sisters, Black, White, Coloured, Indian...South African or foreigner.

Gift of the Givers Response

Gift of the Givers has put its entire machinery into action, in spite of severe restrictions for safe mobility, to respond to the gargantuan crisis created by traitors in our beloved country.

Food Supplies

Hunger was already prevalent prior to the riots. The impact from COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns has already affected many communities. The present rioting and looting has just compounded the problem.

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With Pietermaritzburg and Durban being home to major suppliers of food and other items, many areas were cut off when the riots began. The burning of trucks and the closure of the N3 highway at several points blocked off these communities from receiving their supplies. The violent looting and burning of major supplier warehouses, the shortage of fuel and the lockdown of areas by police and communities – and the constant threat of violence makes the supply of goods to affected communities extremely difficult.

There is still hope...

Getting supplies to those that need it...

Fortunately, many towns were able to secure themselves by blocking off entry and exit points over the last few days. There is, therefore, food available, as many of the warehouses and stores are still stocked. As the situation calms down, these businesses will open and supply the local communities. We are already seeing this happening in Estcourt, Greytown, parts of Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Over the next few days, we expect to see things returning to “normal”, and more people who are able to afford food will be able to purchase directly from the stores.

However, in other towns like Harding, Umzinto, Ixopo, Donnybrook, Empangeni, etc. major supermarkets were destroyed. Even people with money are unable to purchase food from their local stores. Gift of the Givers is already delivering food to these areas for distribution – while the local businesses start to rebuild and replenish their stores.

With the current queueing and inefficient supply, essential workers such as nurses, doctors, police and firefighters etc. are not able to queue as they are needed to care for the community. Staff who care for the frail and elderly aren't able to return home while they play an essential role in protecting those who cannot protect themselves. They queue on behalf of the institution for necessities, leaving their own families at risk. Gift of the Givers are prioritising these institutions and their staff as recipients for supplies.

It is not just the businesses that have been looted or burnt that are affected. The owners have suffered major financial losses. When those businesses cease to operate, temporarily or permanently, their suppliers, customers, service providers and more critically their employees will all be affected. Already many of these employees have been let go. While they may be sustained with the supplies that they currently have, in a few days (or in best case – a few weeks) they will also require assistance. With a long term view in mind, we are putting a plan in place to assist these families. These are not just families in Durban or Pietermaritzburg, but in many areas all over KwaZulu-Natal.

Many residents in KZN are panic-buying. Concerned companies and individuals There is no need to do this. With the information from our major suppliers – there is enough supplies within the province to see us through this situation.

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Medical

Our hospitals remain intact; however, pharmacies and pharmaceutical wholesalers were looted, and trucks were stolen, subsequently and directly affecting hospitals. Frontline workers will not have the supplies they need to support their patients. Local community doctors, who are actively involved within poorer communities have had their practices damaged and medical equipment looted. As a livelihood, affected doctors do not have a practice to return to, and their work in the community comes to an abrupt stop.

We are actively engaging with medical associations to devise plan to help them get back up and running again. Their services, more especially during times like these, are essential to the rebuilding of our communities.

Livelihoods and Business Support

Over the last few days, we have witnessed the devastation materialize before our eyes as our cellphones beeped relentlessly with footage of burning businesses, billows of smoke filling the air, and masses of people running, essentially, with livelihoods in their hands. It goes without saying that the effects of the looting and burning of businesses affect not only the owners, their employees, customers, and suppliers both immediately and in the long-term.

Insurances are likely to pay out over the next two years – if they are able to cover all the requests. Worse still are the uninsured family-run micro-businesses. Many of them have already gone into overdraft and/debt due to the harsh economic climate over the last two years. They have no income, but still have to find a way to cover the fixed costs.

Within the communities we currently work, we are in the process of identifying micro and small businesses (usually family run businesses) to support. We will do so by providing cash donations, coupled with support from supply chain, to help rebuild and re-establish their businesses.

How to Donate

Donate online:

Go to <https://giftofthegivers.org/make-a-difference/> and donate using any one of the options provided.

EFT:

Gift of the Givers Foundation
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 052137228
BANK: Standard Bank
BRANCH: Pietermaritzburg, South Africa
BRANCH CODE: 057525

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Fundraise Locally:

Using this form, create an online fundraiser via our preferred crowdfunding platform, Backabuddy: <https://form.jotform.com/211384945769571>

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