

## Sharing value with our communities continued

### Creating community-focused solutions during Covid-19 in South Africa



#### Partnering with our stakeholders

The coronavirus pandemic highlighted the plight of many vulnerable people situated in the rural areas of South Africa and in our neighbouring communities. In line with our Thrive25 strategy, we reach out to communities and partnered with our stakeholders to create solutions.

We entered into a partnership with the Southern Lodestar Foundation (<https://lodestar.org.za/>), a non-profit organisation that provides innovative food solutions for children. Their highly nutritious instant porridge – known as A+ – is being used in school breakfast programmes. Together, Sappi, the Southern Lodestar Foundation and the Spar Group spearheaded a collaborative effort in terms of which 60,000kg of A+ instant porridge was distributed to vulnerable communities in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. We used our knowledge and access to rural community health networks to ensure that the porridge was reaching those that needed it most in many peri-urban and rural areas adjacent to our mills and plantations.



In an effort to ease the **shortage of masks**, we procured thousands of surgical masks for community clinics and health care centres in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. However, there was also a need for thousands more re-usable cloth masks for our own employees who were continuing to deliver essential services during the national lockdown. We installed sewing machines at the Saiccor and Ngodwana Skills Centres, which meant that apprentices who were not able to continue with their normal training schedule due to the restrictions, sprang into action making cloth masks. These were distributed to own and contractor employees as well as to neighbouring schools. At year end, apprentices had produced just under 73,000 masks. The mask venture has progressed further into the manufacture of overalls.



To heighten awareness of the pandemic and promote understanding we created and distributed **easy-to-understand illustrated infographics** in English and Zulu within our own operations, the employees and families of our contractors and the broader public via the Abashintshi. The latter are a group of Sappi-sponsored young people who act as change agents within their communities. Read more: <https://www.sappi.com/abashintshi-planting-seeds-of-opportunity>

“ Since sharing the infographics, I have been impressed to hear positive talks inside taxis, people expressing their commitment to obey the law and to take all the necessary precautions to fight the virus. ”

Phumlani Mhlongo,  
Abashintshi  
change agent



In keeping with the Typek brand message to 'Live a life of note', the public were encouraged to share their messages of **hope and inspiration** on how they were 'living a life of note' during the South African lockdown, using Facebook and Instagram. Entries in the Typek campaign stood a chance of winning ZAR1,000 a day, with Sappi pledging an additional ZAR1,000 a day to the Solidarity Fund. Sappi SA also donated a donation of Sappi Triple Green Tissue and Typek office paper to the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) for future distribution to deserving recipients.

## Sharing value with our communities continued

### Paying it forward in response to Covid-19 in North America

Past ITM winners stepped up and paid it forward to help a world in need.

#### MASS Design Group supports hospitals with Covid-19 Design Response team

Hospitals around the world are rapidly transforming their physical environments and systems to keep employees and patients safe. MASS Design Group, recipient of an ITM grant in 2010, has formed a Covid-19 Design Response team in support of this effort. Drawing on the valuable insight from lessons learned in the field, this team is responding to hospital and community healthcare partner needs by sharing strategies and rules of thumb with those retrofitting different spaces for infection control.

The Covid-19 Design Response team has partnered with the Mount Sinai Hospital and Ariadne Labs to conduct a three-week study to understand which spatial design interventions can help mitigate the risk of infection. As the team shares their conclusions, they hope to scale the research and collaboration between healthcare staff and designers to encourage thoughtful spatial interventions and literacy with Covid-19 units nation-wide.



#### Studio Usher secures internet access for five million virtual students

In 2013, *Studio Usher* received an ITM grant to develop communication materials in print, digital, and motion for EducationSuperHighway, an organisation providing advocacy and consultation to states and school districts in order to connect American public school classrooms to high-speed Internet. The organisation worked to bring broadband to 99% of all K-12 (ie ranging from kindergarten to 12th grade) public schools. The project had

been slated to shut down in April 2020 as their mission was accomplished.

But in the face of Covid-19, with 55 million K-12 students sheltering in place and schools moving their classrooms online, this dynamic organisation hired back most of their staff to focus on connecting the five million students in the US who do not have access to the internet at home.



## Sharing value with our communities continued

### Paying it forward in response to Covid-19 in North America

#### Made by We supported sustainable farmers during Covid-19

In 2019, *Made by We* received a grant to support Farm Commons, an online community and platform filled with legal resources and tutorials for the sustainability-minded farmer. *Made by We* developed an all-in-one workbook with hands-on materials for both new and experienced farmers to help them become more comfortable with farm law. The workbook and kit paired in-depth information with hands-on learning techniques and serves as a physical reference for Farmers.

As the danger of Covid-19 became a reality, *Made by We* was able to quickly add a new section to the Farm Commons website. The non-profit released free Covid-19 resources for free on a regular basis, ranging from webinars to podcasts and other advice for farmers trying to understand their legal and financial options during the pandemic. By quickly and creatively pivoting their model, Farm Commons continued to support the farmers who rely on them for resources, services, and most importantly, community.



### Supporting our people in SEU

#### Helping those facing real hardship

In response to Covid-19, the Sappi board of directors together the group and regional leadership teams (Europe, North America, Southern Africa and Sappi Trading) volunteered to take a 10% reduction in salary for three months.

Using the money generated in this way, SEU established a dedicated Hardship Fund to help employees who faced real hardship as a direct result of the impact of the virus. The fund was opened up to enable SEU employees to contribute towards and apply to the fund for themselves or on behalf of someone else. In the spirit of not only looking out for our own safety it was felt important to allow the open application to help support employees experiencing hardship directly caused by Covid-19 as e.g. extra medical and rehabilitation expenses not covered by an insurance and any loss of income.

“ *There is a very human cost to this crisis, so we have established a fund to help those in special need, built by voluntary gifts. We hope this gesture goes some way to illustrate that the determination and commitment shown during this time is very much appreciated from the top down, and that we intend to support one another through this period.* ”

Berry Wiersum  
CEO Sappi Europe

