



AfriForum  
**COMMUNITY PLAN**  
FOR COVID-19

## INTRODUCTION

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AfriForum's power lies in the organisation's branches and volunteers, who take the lead on all community levels in addressing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in cooperation with AfriForum's other structures across the country.

AfriForum's heartbeat is our local branches, who work in communities all over the country to bring relief, to offer solutions and to create hope in various areas and ways. The COVID-19 pandemic proved more than ever that communities cannot rely on government. Communities must now proceed like never before in a structured manner to make themselves state resistant. The pandemic demonstrated the power of communities in which people work together to manage and safeguard their communities themselves. Considering what AfriForum achieved during the lockdown, it confirms the effective ability of volunteers working in communities independently from the state. Kindly refer to the infographic attached in this regard.

Community projects and cooperation are essential and effective. In fact, the COVID-19 crisis emphasised the necessity of branches and community networks. AfriForum's more than 235 000 members are part of a country-wide network of 142 branches, each of these

well organised with branch structures and different portfolios. Individual branches in turn form part of a network of branches in regions and provinces. This establishes a network of communities that will be extended during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to implement a network of communities that can support each another and cooperate to the mutual benefit of everyone.

The COVID-19 pandemic affects South Africa and the world in a far-reaching way. AfriForum's COVID-19 community plan focuses on five key points to help ensure the well-being of our members and their communities.

The community plan focuses on the following:

- Community safety
- Community economy
- Community food production and distribution
- Community health
- Community government and municipal services.

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## COMMUNITY SAFETY

*IAN CAMERON: HEAD OF COMMUNITY SAFETY*

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### Expectations for the coming months

AfriForum expects a rise in poverty and food shortages, which may lead to social unrest and crimes like theft, and home and business burglaries. Increased poverty can also result in a decrease in neighbourhood watch members, as they can no longer afford to go out on patrol. Depending on the further progress of the lockdown, there may also be an increase in shop looting and vehicle hijackings.

Government will have to allow on a certain level of

the lockdown for the reinstatement of neighbourhood watches and other security structures in communities. As society moves towards a greater degree of normality with every level of lockdown, the space in which the habitual criminal operates also increases. The so-called window of opportunity grows, which leads to an increase in crime.

We have already seen an increase in illegal trading as a result of the draconic limitations of the regulations. This

will most likely continue or even increase but does not pose a real security threat to our members.

There has also been an increase in police and defence force members who are diagnosed with COVID-19.

## Building plan

### **General safety tasks**

- Provide further training to neighbourhood watch members during the lockdown via digital platforms.
- Support the neighbourhood watch management in developing the necessary contingency plan for their area and to liaise with other role-players in the area.
- Process and distribute information about the new lockdown levels to ensure that everyone understands what they may and may not do.
- Consider various new neighbourhood watch financing models to ensure the continuation of

Consequently, there is a decrease in the state's human resource capacity to combat crime. AfriForum's neighbourhood and farm watches will continue the distribution of food to indigents in cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand.

patrols despite members not having the financial means.

- Offer support to Solidarity Helping Hand and other local initiatives to support community members who suffer hardship. This is discussed in more detail below because at this stage – during lockdown level 4 – this remains our main focus.

### **Distribution of food and other essentials**

The Community Safety (CS) division will have two main responsibilities in terms of the food and item distribution strategy, namely **protection** and **distribution**. Food and essential items are distributed country wide by AfriForum's Community Affairs (CA) division in

cooperation with AfriForum branches. In executing these two responsibilities, the division will continue as nodal link to coordinate deliveries in cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand and – among other – to keep record in cooperation with AfriForum's CA division.

### **Protection during distribution**

- Assist with distance analyses and recommendations for delivery and provision points, as well as delivery routes.
- Liaise beforehand with the CS division about the suitability of these provision areas.
- Assist with physical reconnaissance and the protection of the delivery and provision areas, as well as delivery routes and stores, if necessary.
- Support any escorting duties in case of vehicles that require protection and must deliver in various areas.
- Arrange or appoint protection groups (possibly external contractors) to protect stores, where and when necessary.
- CS structures (for example neighbourhood watches) are tasked additionally when additional protection and manpower are required. The instruction may only be issued via the regional heads.
- The CS control centre must monitor the situation continuously.

### **Distribution tasks**

- Receive requests for food, water, medical care and so forth from indigents, and communicate these needs to the nodal point to ensure that AfriForum structures remain informed.
- Liaise with various institutions that can contribute (in cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand).
- Manage storing (centralised or decentralised) if large donations for direct distress are received, with the purpose of fast, decentralised distribution, over and above continuous cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand's *Josef Silo's* project.
- Extend a distribution network that links into the existing CS structure, in cooperation with AfriForum's CA division, Saai and Solidarity Helping Hand.



## Fighting plan

AfriForum's CS division plays a watchdog role in ensuring that neighbourhood and farm watches are allowed to function again as soon as possible to promote community safety during government's phasing in of the levels of economy reintroduction.

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## COMMUNITY ECONOMY

*ALANA BAILEY: HEAD OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS; AND  
SANDERINE VAN DER WALT: MANAGER OF AFRIFORUM NETWORK AND AFRIVRIENDELIK*

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South Africa has already started to feel the negative economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Economies in communities will unfortunately not escape these consequences, because the impact of the pandemic on small and medium-sized businesses is enormous.

AfriForum is concerned over the many predictions of retrenchments, job losses and the closing of small and medium-sized businesses. The phased-in reopening of the economy offers very little relief to most owners of small and medium-sized businesses, however. This is exacerbated by the refusal and absence of government relief because of the role that a company's BEE status plays in the consideration and granting of financial support, or limited government relief through initiatives

such as the SMME Fund or the Tourism Relief Fund.

AfriForum focuses on small and medium-sized businesses on a national as well as community level. We realise that these businesses are especially at risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survival of these businesses in a community means that families can survive financially, workers can still work and earn an income, and the community can continue to prosper. Entrepreneurship at this level is necessary to stimulate job creation, especially in a country where the government is unsympathetic towards businesspeople or does not make it easier for them through clear policies and accommodating legislation.

## Building plan

### ***AfriForum Network***

AfriForum Network is AfriForum's initiative to support small and medium-sized businesses through a network of businesses and service providers, empowering them with relevant information to function optimally

### ***Business between communities***

AfriForum Network will focus on linking businesses and service providers from the communities in which its branches are active to do business with each other, but also to give them national and international exposure, where possible. We aim to encourage as many businesses and service providers to take up membership of AfriForum Network (membership is free) in order to use the platform as a means to encourage the most exposure and intercommunity trade.

and establishing business activity through which the community's capital is used in the community itself and to the community's benefit.

a business portfolio tasked with recruiting as many businesses and service providers possible in cooperation with AfriForum's district and regional coordinators. In this way, a network will be created in which business can be conducted between communities to support everyone who form part of the network. Relations with existing chambers of commerce (where these exist) and other business networks will be improved to bargain for the best opportunities and benefits for members.

To this purpose, AfriForum branches will establish

## **Empowerment**

AfriForum Network's value chain during the COVID-19 lockdown and thereafter focuses on supporting small and medium-sized businesses with:

- Information;

- Basic advice;
- Access to specialists; and
- AfriVriendelik.

## **Fighting plan**

AfriForum is applying for direct access to the Constitutional Court to appeal the recent ruling of the High Court, namely that BEE status may play a role in granting financial support to small and medium-sized businesses. AfriForum argues that race should play no role in crises like these, where all businesses, regardless of the race of the owner or its BEE status, should be entitled to government support.

AfriForum Network recently created a platform where small and medium-sized business owners – who applied for UIF/TERS funds but have not yet received pay-outs – can sign a petition against this racism.

## **Reopening of the economy**

AfriForum continuously monitors the measures and regulations for the phased reopening of the economy,

and evaluate these to determine whether legal action is necessary to expedite the reopening of the economy.

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# **FOOD STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITIES**

*CORNÉ CRONJÉ: MANAGER OF COMMUNITY STRUCTURES*

Government does not have the capacity to resolve the food crisis that stems from the COVID-19 pandemic. We therefore do not expect any help from government and will have to resolve the crisis in our communities ourselves. A growing food shortage faces our communities. We have to solve this crisis through a multi-layered strategy that will address the food shortage and the consequences thereof on various levels.

AfriForum's food strategy is aimed at relieving Solidarity Helping Hand's task of providing food to indigents. Our approach is adaptable and will be adjusted continuously to ensure its effectivity. Solidarity Helping Hand, Saai and AfriForum cooperate to effect the provision and distribution of food on ground level, which will result in permanent cooperation models in communities.

## **Building plan**

AfriForum's food strategy will focus on the following:

### **Food provision**

Branch support funds were established on local level that will specifically focus on food shortage relief in communities. This will be achieved by providing

food through donations, while people are taken up in Solidarity Helping Hand's social network for assessment and future support.

### **Food procurement**

AfriForum continuously receives food donations from people, businesses and farmers. Donations are encouraged and administrated in cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand. Agreements are currently

entered into with cooperatives to be able to send grain donations directly to these cooperatives for further processing into maize flour, for example, which can then be distributed to the community.

## **Food production**

Pilot projects were launched in various communities to plant edible crops where branches can farm these. The first phase of the pilot project entails the erection of tunnels from which crops can be distributed to the community to bring relief.

## **Food processing**

AfriForum is currently launching a project to process and package dried meals that can be procured and stored at a minimum cost. A pilot project was also launched to manufacture dry ingredients. This product will be

AfriForum plans on growing crops sustainably in the near future in towns where agricultural land is available or are made available for this purpose.

Cooperation agreements with local farmers are very important for this strategy.

included when it has been refined sufficiently.

Dry nutritious meals will be made available and stored in the short and long term to be distributed to indigents in cooperation with Solidarity Helping Hand.

## **Fighting plan**

AfriForum supports Solidarity Helping Hand in future litigation to prevent the centralisation of donations by government.

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# COMMUNITY HEALTH

*DR EUGENE BRINK: HSTRATEGIC ADVISOR*

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One of the biggest persistent problems, and that is now exacerbated and emphasised by the COVID-19 pandemic, is the issue of loneliness and the associated problems that this poses to mental health. Especially older people, but many young people too, can become victims. Older people are especially at risk in this time because their children and loved ones cannot visit them as often as before. However, it is a permanent phenomenon that is now simply exacerbated.

Especially older people without medical schemes may struggle to find medical treatment because state hospitals are overwhelmed. Others may struggle to obtain the correct medicine. Public hospitals may simply start showing away people with other ailments because of COVID-19 workloads; in fact, such stories are already doing the rounds.

Information remains one of the public's greatest

needs, and it should therefore be addressed in a more structured manner. Many people are also disillusioned with and confused by the lockdown and what it actually entails. AfriForum already plays an important role in this regard by providing members with sound information.

There persists a great (and even growing) need for personal protective equipment (PPE) at various retirement homes and other institutions. Masks, hand sanitisers, gloves and other equipment are equipment for which many institutions – already under financial pressure – hardly ever budget and cannot afford.

Food also remains a great and growing need. The economic impact of COVID-19 and the lockdown will be felt for a long time. AfriForum is already one of the largest food distributors in the country and manages enormous donations of, among other, nartjies, oranges, flour and various other foods.

## Building plan

### **Communication**

AfriForum is making expert advice on health issues and especially COVID-19 available to our members and branches. This will be continued more structured and in

various ways. AfriForum should be the primary source of reputable, contextualised information for Afrikaners.

### **Distribution of food and immunity initiative**

This initiative will probably obtain more momentum when farmers start donating from their crops.

We will continue to inform the public on the promotion of immunity and at the same time distribute donations.

### **Providing PPE**

We will – where capacity and budget allow – provide PPE to employees of institutions that provide critical services to the community and that take care of vulnerable people. AfriForum has already donated PPE across the country to the SAPS, medical personnel and

retirement homes. These actions will be augmented and escalated. AfriForum is currently launching an information campaign with advice on the home-manufacturing of masks to empower communities to make fabric masks themselves.

### **Schools**

AfriForum is planning pilot projects for the testing of the disinfection of schools in cooperation with local role-players. AfriForum's Education division is currently rolling out measures in cooperation with AfriForum Youth to

support schools in ensuring the safe return of learners to schools, including information campaigns and help in purchasing equipment such as thermometers and hand sanitisers.

## Fighting plan

### **Watchdog role regarding government negligence and offences**

This point relates especially to the treatment of the public at hospitals and quarantine facilities. There rests a constitutional responsibility on hospitals to treat people and this should be adhered to. Various remedies such as legal action and media pressure will be employed to fight these injustices. AfriForum recently submitted a

successful urgent application to the High Court to ensure the closing of the quarantine facility near Groblersdal.

See the attached infographic for statistics on the donation of hand sanitisers.

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES

*MORNÉ MOSTERT: MANAGER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS; AND  
LAMBERT DE KLERK: MANAGER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS*

Local government is the level of government with the most responsibility to provide services to communities. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, municipalities were under pressure and did not meet standards. The provincial and national spheres of government are responsible for ensuring that municipalities meet these standards, but often fall short, too.

The lockdown exacerbated the circumstances, and

urgent steps had to be taken to prevent loss of life. The question that faces AfriForum is what effect the pandemic will have on municipalities. It is very clear that one of the effects of the lockdown is that the economy will be severely handicapped. This has a direct impact on the ability of consumers to pay for services. According to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), this will have a material impact on the total value chain of municipal service delivery.

AfriForum believes that the decrease in income will also cause trouble for Eskom. This will provide Eskom with the opportunity to submit a regulatory clearing account (RCA) application to Nersa because this is the appropriate way for Eskom to reintroduce these funds into their budget. It is important to remember, however, that Nersa was closed during level 5 lockdown. This means that Nersa will first have to consider all electricity tariff applications before municipal councils can have their respective budgets approved.

To sum up: Service delivery in South Africa will be

under major pressure. The state has already been under enormous pressure in terms of service delivery, but the COVID-19 pandemic simply exacerbated the situation. It is important that communities in South Africa have the ability and know-how to provide answers to these problems on ground level. Municipalities must still meet the standards set out in the Constitution and other legislation, however. Communities can work together to ensure that services are provided in a sustainable manner by concluding agreements with the state.

## **Building plan**

Given these circumstances, AfriForum will continue with the following projects:

### ***Disaster management plans***

AfriForum's branch structures will continue to develop and refine disaster management plans according to community needs.

### ***Water strategy***

AfriForum's COVID-19 water strategy focuses on ensuring clean, drinkable water to communities as far

as possible. The strategy has a static as well as mobile water delivery element.

### ***Self-management of services***

AfriForum has already identified pilot projects especially in the area of refuse removal to self-manage refuse removal when these services collapse completely. AfriForum will soon launch its own service delivery

company, which will have to develop and mobilise its own capacity to render services to communities without begin reliant on the state.

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### ***Public-private partnerships***

The disintegration of municipalities and the financial difficulties in which most municipalities find themselves will be accelerated by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This creates circumstances in which AfriForum will endeavour to fill existing legal space to help municipalities in managing these services. The first area that AfriForum will focus on is that of public-private partnerships (PPPs).

A PPP comprises a long-term agreement between a state organ, such as a municipality, and a private entity, in most cases a registered company. The purpose of a PPP is to transfer those duties that are normally the responsibility

of a state organ to a private company to provide these functions or services, with an associated risk for the private partner.

Municipalities find themselves in a fast-changing technological environment, but as a result of high associated costs cannot always obtain access to effective technology. The private sector, on the other hand, finds itself in a competitive environment and utilises proven management processes and technology. A PPP creates the ideal opportunity to fill this gap effectively.



Without reinventing the wheel, the use of proven technologies, experience and expertise can be shared, which should be cost-effective for state organs. For the

public, this means improved and cost-effective services, which should result in a surplus to render even more services.

## Fighting plan

### ***Watchdog function***

AfriForum's watchdog function on local government level – namely to ensure service delivery as far as possible – is now more important than ever. AfriForum will therefore continue its watchdog function in terms of service delivery by applying pressure to national

government level and ensuring that state departments not only fulfil their duty as caretakers, but also that applicable action adheres to the requirements of the Constitution and other legislation.

### ***Electricity tariffs***

AfriForum must monitor electricity tariffs so that Nersa as well as municipalities follow a fair process in applying

for and approving electricity tariffs. The organisation will also appeal Nersa's Cost of Supply study.

### ***Rebates***

AfriForum will analyse municipality bylaws to determine which rebates are available to people who are temporarily unemployed.

### ***Strategic litigation***

Afriforum will soon launch strategic legal action in the local government sphere.

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### ***Participating in integrated development plans***

Every year, AfriForum participates in the municipalities' annual integrated development plans, which form the core document for municipal service delivery. AfriForum not only studies these documents to point out any

shortcomings, but also to offer possible solutions.

Participation in this process continues despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

