



April 2020

Masiphumelele, Südafrika

Dear friends,

the coronavirus has also arrived in South Africa. First it was "social distancing" and closure of schools, a few days later the announcement of a strict curfew (lockdown) from 27 March for 21 days. We don't have much time to prepare the children and ourselves. Our dear visitors from Rednitzhembach had to leave earlier than planned, the children had to finish the last exams quickly and Doris also had to change her flight for the planned stay in Germany in April, before South Africa discontinued commercial flights completely. As everywhere else in the world, we are very concerned about the consequences of the pandemic for South Africa and of course first of all for our children and their families. With trust in God and love of neighbor we want to go through the next weeks and pray for us here in Masiphumelele and for you in Germany for God's blessing, its preservation and much peace in all the uncertainty.

The new greeting was practiced with the children instead of shuffling hands and hugging. Most of the boys thought it was pretty cool. This was difficult for the children, who have to grow up without a mother. All day long they were looking forward to the hugs from us "Mamas" and then only an elbow greeting! Zusiphe put it in a nutshell: "This is NOT possible! I need my hug"!



Disinfecting hands was also included



On the last day before Clever Kids had to close for curfew, we had a full agenda. We informed the kids about Covid-19 and talked about the necessary changes in behaviour. Information material in Xhosa for the parents took them home. The children, who have their birthday during curfew, got their party, a present and the cake to take home.

Encouraged and strengthened us by the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den from our Bible program, which we watched at the end. After a touching time of prayer and worship we said goodbye to the children at home.



The situation in Cape Town

The lockdown is one of the strictest national curfews in the world. We are only allowed to leave the house for the visits to doctors and pharmacies and for shopping for food. The authorities reacted here at a comparatively early stage. To date, approximately 1655 people are registered as infected. There is great fear that the virus will spread in the townships. South Africa has a high number of people living with HIV, the lung disease tuberculosis and asthma. The public healthcare system would collapse immediately if the virus were to spread rapidly. Even now, it is already overwhelmed. In the last few days the first cases have been reported in the township of Khayelitsha. Now, especially in the townships, door-to-door testing is to be carried out intensively.

What's the next step for us?

The families of our children are not only afraid of the virus, but also of financial losses. Many are trying to make a living from one week to the next. The curfew makes this almost impossible and thus confronts the day labourers, who each have a large number of family members to feed, with existential hardships. The President promised help, but experience shows that this takes a long time to implement.



Karin is in contact with our employees, who all live in the township, and with the families of our children, so that we can react immediately if there is any need. We are also in communication with other charitable organizations and authorities to find out when which aid programs will start.

The preparations are already underway so that we can provide our 34 families with a food package (basic food for 4 weeks, for 4-6 people) and hygiene items (soap, toothpaste, washing powder, ...) in April.

Our 7th-10th grade children receive their schoolwork online from the teachers. At home they have neither computer nor WLAN. We have therefore paid each child a monthly data package so that they can at least work via their parents' mobile phone.



Visit from Karin's home town Rednitzhembach

This year we spent our holidays in Cape Town and accompanied Karin at her work during this time. We got an impression of how much the children look forward to the afternoons at Clever Kids, the attention they get there and

the learning aids. It was great to see how lovingly Karin's staff treats the children. They are aware

every day what a God's gift Clever Kids is. It's like a second family for everyone involved! And Karin in the middle as "Mummy" for everyone, who keeps an eye on everything and always takes time for hugs and caresses that the children enjoy so much.

Thank you for welcoming us with open arms and for letting us be a part of your Clever Kids family! May God keep you safe and carry you safely through the crisis!



Lea and Iris

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