



# JAMSA Covid-19 Responds



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JAM South Africa is committed to “Helping Africa Help Itself”

JAM South Africa(JAMSA) is an affiliate of JAM International, a South Africa-founded humanitarian organization with the vision of Helping Africa Help Itself. JAM was founded in 1984 and currently feeds and serves more than 1,4 million beneficiaries in Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.

In South Africa JAM SA started operating in 2006, area called Orange Farm, South of Johannesburg. Our Early Childhood development (ECD) center feeding program reached approximately 120 000 pre-school children in 3000 centers. We operate in all nine provinces, feeding children a highly nutritious porridge on daily basis, which is a Corn Soya Blend with micro and macro nutrients, targeting the ECD centres that are not funded.

JAM believes that without education, there can be no development, and hungry children cannot learn. We approach development through Nutrition; Water and Sanitation Health (WASH) ECD Practitioner and Agriculture Training; and Community Involvement.

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# What Interventions has JAM put in place due to the pandemic and lockdown

- JAM South Africa (JAMSA) normally serves 120 000 beneficiaries that attend over 3 000 JAMSA supported Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers.
  - With the consent of the donors, we repurposed funds for take home rations, family food parcels, training of ECD centers to re- open safely in accordance to Department of Social Development requirements, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) readiness kits.
  - We developed an SMS food voucher distribution platform:
    - To preserve the dignity of the recipients
    - To provide safety and security by having a small number of people collecting food at the same time.
    - Putting funding into the hands of ECD centers by having them earn income for the distribution
    - In our food parcels we aimed to provide nutritionally adequate meals by providing a starge, protein and dairy
- Redirected funding to short and medium term needs during pandemic.

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- On the announced closure of the ECD centers we commenced distribution of our breakfast to the families of the beneficiaries. Parents Were encouraged to collect take home ration of the uncooked breakfast from the ECD Centre/agreed point, so that they could provide a meal for their children while they were home.
- During distribution of food JAMSA had the opportunity to engage with the parents and/or guardians of the beneficiaries on good hygiene practices and establishing food gardens to improve their food security.
- JAM SA has since realised the importance of household food gardens, In normal circumstances our food security programme has been primarily focused on ECD and very little on the household.

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- JAM SA has expanded the nutrition programme to the household level, We are implementing 100 household gardens in three provinces currently. Providing the basic skill of growing food would essentially be vital for the resilience of the household and the nutrition of a child.
- We saw ourselves working closely with Department of Social Dev and DoH in some of the provinces. We collaborated in workshops, training ECD owners and teachers on WASH and compliance to the COVID 19 regulations.
- Like many organisation we had to be adjusted for Covid-19 compliance (Masks, Social Distance, Sanitizing).

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# Observations of children and ECD programmes



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- Although we didn't come across severe malnutrition during our food intervention. We did witness a number of parents and children in desperate need for assistance constantly. The CSS take home ration was highly in demand in the West Cape, KwaZulu Natal, and the Eastern Cape. Parents came in numbers to collect the take home rations of the ECD centers.

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## Programme lessons and elements that perhaps did not work and had to be changed

- Not necessary programmes that did not work, but more of gaps that were identified within our existing programmes. In a normal situation JAMSA does not deal with Parents beneficiaries directly or even the child. In order for the SMS voucher system to work or be efficient we needed full names and contact details of the beneficiaries and of parents. Which has never been part of our monitoring and evaluation before. This slowed down the intervention as some of the data received was incorrect, parents did not know what JAM is and were skeptical to go collect their food hampers when they received the sms.

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## Recommendations to: -Similar organizations:

- Engagements with secondary beneficiaries (parents) is crucial, it should not be limited to ECD only. Organizations should make an effort to engage with parents to better appreciate the ECD's efforts to bring in quality service in the ECD centers. Knowing what the child's need is from a household level will help us make informed decisions about the type of service we bring to the ECD Centres.



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# -Policy makers, Gov(DoH, DsD or even DBE)

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- Children can always catch up on lessons missed during the pandemic, but some of the malnutrition conditions are irreversible. The cause and effect of malnutrition has an enormous impact on the development of a child. Nutrition should be given priority especially in times of a disaster.



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# Thank You

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