

# Kindness Makes a Difference

By Xabrina-Michel'li Thompson

South Africa is already plagued by widespread poverty. The pandemic aggravated the plight of many of the country's poorest people. Weeks of unrest have left stores burned, shelves empty, and many people hungry. However, in the aftermath of the violent unrest that saw access to food disrupted after vehicles, warehouses, and businesses were destroyed and pillaged, the government-promised "immediate food relief" was not available in many areas surrounding Durban, the hard-hit capital of the KwaZulu-Natal province. It was the poorest people without food and reliable transportation that struggled the most in the aftermath of last month's unrest. I reached out to the Gabriel Love Foundation in Benjamin Generation Childcare Centre's hour of need to ask for their support and as philanthropic leaders they recognized the critical need to act with ferocious urgency to support the Benjamin Generation Childcare Centre, a children's safe haven in the quaint little town of New Hanover, South Africa, and made a generous donation to help the needy children and families who were facing hunger. It was the kind act of compassion of the Gabriel Love Foundation that made a significant difference during the most trying of times. It would have been an absolute tragedy if the children, staff, and their immediate families were without food. The Benjamin Generation Childcare Centre is also commended for being so proactive in securing alternative food supplies at such short notice even at personal risk. These heartwarming acts of kindness are selfless acts that remind us of all the ways we can help others on any given day of the year.

The philanthropic impulse to help others and make the world a better place is innate in every human soul. *Everyone regardless of where they are born, deserves access to nutritious food and the ability to cook and enjoy a meal with their families.* One does not have to travel far to come face to face with a worldwide phenomenon that has crept even closer to home since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Hunger. The pandemic of poverty and malnutrition is a public health issue on a scale that is overwhelming. The statistics of chronic malnutrition in South Africa are staggering and on the rise. More than just an unpleasant sensation, hunger prevents people from realizing their full potential, which in turn perpetuates inequity. Even if every child has access to

education, they will not be able to learn effectively if they are hungry. South Africa is plagued with both hunger and malnutrition, with one in every four persons suffers hunger on a regular basis, and more than half of the population lives in such insecure circumstances that they are at risk of going hungry. The total number of people facing hunger is estimated around 13 million. These statistics are troubling, but behind each statistic is a face with a story of what it's like to be hungry in a country where the few have plenty. The Gabriel Love Foundation take these statistics seriously and put a face to each one of them. Society as a whole has a responsibility to care for those around them. If you are looking for a way to help others with your time, voice, or money at the culmination of this trying year, I strongly suggest donating to one of the organizations doing phenomenal work. Every one of them could use additional resources to help the communities they serve, and the hope you give them will almost certainly feed your own. I will continue to use my voice to advocate for assistance to improve the lives of children and adults in need. Never underestimate the power of words. Words move hearts.

*Here are a few pictures of some of the many food aid parcels that were distributed to several hungry households. It was truly a lifeline for them.*





