

## COVID-19: SPECIAL RISK REVIEW

At the time of writing this report, South Africa is in COVID-19 lockdown. We have considered the many unknowns and risks that can affect Realema and feel that, while we expect challenging times ahead, our conservative financial and management approach ensures that Realema's risks are limited in the short to medium term.

- **Internships:** Our interns have contracts with their Partner Schools and are included in arrangements made with staff members. At present, they continue to receive their salaries. Many of our interns are their families' sole breadwinners, who would have been in grave situations, were it not for their Realema bursaries. Most of our interns help with the online lessons offered by their Partner Schools, teaching them new and valuable skills. Persistent lockdown and social distancing may lead to staff cuts at Partner Schools. If Realema interns were to be retrenched, we will assist them in investigating and applying for UIF.
- **Data and connectivity:** Many of our interns remain accommodated at their Partner Schools for lockdown, where they have access to Wi-Fi. We provide data to those who went home and cannot afford data.
- **Additional financial support:** Realema has given each intern additional financial support.
- **Tertiary studies:** Our interns all study distance teaching degrees and they are accustomed to online studying. We expect universities to continue delivering their distance courses with little disruption.
- **Tutoring and mentoring:** We continue to support our interns remotely via WhatsApp, email and telephone chats. We speak to them individually and send them group motivations. Academic tutoring continues online through Zoom and e-mail. Our counsellor can offer Skype counselling sessions when needed.
- **Selection and interview processes:** If social distancing and lockdown extends to year-end, we will conduct interviews remotely and adapt our selection metrics.
- **Administrative functions:** Realema's management has always worked from home, so there is no disruption to output. Governance and donor stewardship continue as before.
- **Fundraising:** We expect fundraising to become more challenging, but we will continue to explore every avenue as we always have done. Education underpins our country as a whole, and as such we trust that donors will continue to support Realema.
- **Financial sustainability:** Our conservative financial approach (we only offer bursaries if we have enough funding in place to support interns' university fees and books for the four years that it takes to complete a teaching degree) ensures that none of our existing interns are at risk of having to interrupt their studies due to shortage of funds. Realema's Director and Manager already subsidise Realema by working from home, using their own cars and office equipment, and their fees are well below South African non-profit benchmarks. We are scrutinising all our expenses to cut back wherever we can.
- **Expansion and bursary offering:** We will offer new bursaries commensurate to our ability to support them for four years, as has always been our strategy. This may mean that we offer fewer bursaries at the end of the year than usual and delay our plans to expand further to new Partner Schools and areas. We strongly believe that our personal interaction and knowledge of each intern is what sets Realema apart in terms of best being able to support each wonderfully different intern – this underpins our strategy of expansion.
- **Matric Programme:** We may not be able to offer the full Matric Programme and job shadowing experience. We will assess lockdown and social distancing developments and adapt our programme where necessary.

### Mxolisi Mangena's feedback during the lockdown in April 2020

The things we have learnt and experienced through Realema have been of great help throughout this time of panic and uncertainty. Students worldwide have had to take care of themselves academically, physically and mentally, and it saddens me to say that many of them are not coping - but not us Realema Interns. Realema equipped us with skills that were invaluable long before the lockdown happened. The time management workshop helps me to manage my time like a guru, the stress management and meditation workshops help me stay sane and goal-orientated, and the constant motivation to be physically active is a major help, especially now that we are cooped up. Now, more than ever, I am grateful and proud to be a Realema intern. I wish more students worldwide could get what Realema offers!

