



Informal Settlement Eikenhof  
R544, Eikenhof, 1872  
Dr Bruno - 061 190 8080  
[bpaul@lantic.net](mailto:bpaul@lantic.net)

Dear friends,

*more than 20 years ago, in 1999, a group of mothers asked the Salesian Sister Mary Hughes to help them look after their small children. She didn't hesitate and started a small development project for women and a creche for a handful of children. The seed for a project of love to help children thrive in a world of hunger, social tension, and hopelessness."*

*This is how I started my last newsletter. Little did we know what was going to happen in the next 3 months. We all thought that Lerato could weather any storm. And for 20 years we did so very well.*

**Unfortunately, the Department of Education has closed down our Primary School with immediate effect.**

*This is part of a drive of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to close down all illegal schools in Gauteng. We had several meetings with officials, but it was made very clear to us, that - although we are seen as a school of high standards fulfilling all possible regulations - because Jacksonsdrift is built on dolomite the school can never get registration.*

*We were issued with a legal notice on 17 November 2020 threatening charges if we don't comply.*

*The board looked into various solutions to save Lerato Educational Centre in its current format. We negotiated with GDE, with the staff and tried to find a solution with the community that would allow a continuation as a project in the same way that you know and love Lerato.*

*However, Lerato board and staff could not agree on a solution that would have allowed the centre to be run in a smaller format at reduced staffing levels.*

*The teachers and support staff rather expressed their wish to take over the project and manage it themselves.*

*Please, let me summarise the current situation:*



Food donations - ABSA



- *Lerato Educational Centre has been deregistered as a Non-Profit organisation with effect of 31 December 2020. We had to deregister to follow legally required processes.*
- *As a result, we have handed over the project to the community who will continue to run a creche for an estimated number of 250 - 300 children.*
- ***Rainbow Children Trust (RBC) who has always been the biggest sponsor of Lerato will continue to support the creche, the sports teams, the feeding scheme and the after school program. If you are interested in continue with your support, please, find the details below. RBC is particularly interested in the continuation of the feeding program and the support of the afterschool program 'Kasi' that has successfully helped many high school children to study, improve their marks and pass Matrik.***
- *All children received reports and transfer letters and we are waiting for the GDE to finalise placements in schools around the area. Although we are worried that many children, particularly from foreign and migration background will fall through the net, we have confidence that GDE is trying hard to ensure that all 350 primary school learners will go to school in 2021.*



Thanks to the many families who prepared Santa's shoeboxes for our kids



*This is the end of an era that lasted more than 20 years.*

*Hopefully, it is also the beginning of a new era in Jacksonsdrift.*

*The project has always been for the community. The staff received enough guidance and training to care for and teach the children entrusted to them. We wish them success and many happy years. May they continue to bring smiles to the children of Jacksonsdrift.*



*We are grateful to all staff for helping us to fulfil our mandate of nourishing, teaching and caring for thousands of children in the past 20 years. Even though the last weeks were more than bumpy, It has been a great journey together and the board wants to thank all staff members for making Lerato a learning place of excellence.*

*We are so grateful to all of you, too: You helped us with your donations, your prayers, your encouragement. You were there when we needed help.*

*We never despaired because we had your support.*



Our last graduation class. God bless them and give them a bright future

***It is with a sad heart that we deregister Lerato. But we trust in God that something good comes out of it. Keep our children, their parents, the staff and us in your prayers.***

*Bruno Pauly, Chairperson - on behalf of the board of management.*



***On a technical note:***

***Lerato Educational Centre - as a legal entity - will have to close all operations.***

*Our bank accounts will be closed soon. All funds received by then will benefit the children from Jacksonsdrift. We will buy food for the poorest families.*

*We will not be able to issue Section 18A certificates dated post 31 December 2020. I will, however, be able to issue certificates for money received before this date.*

***I know that many of you care for the children of Jacksonsdrift. Currently, the new management has no legal structure and they have no dedicated bank account. If you wish to support this desperate community, you can use Rainbow Children Trust (Lerato's biggest donor organisation) to distribute money to the community.***

*I will personally ensure that all money received with the reference 'Lerato' or 'Jacksonsdrift' will directly benefit the poor through food donations, learning materials or any purpose that you wish it to be used for. Feel free to contact me via [bpauly@lantic.net](mailto:bpauly@lantic.net) for banking details.*