

Tshikululu's Top 6 Lessons Learnt for Social Investors' Covid-19 Response



Since South Africa went into lockdown in March, Tshikululu has learnt many valuable lessons for social investors who want to respond effectively and maximise social impact in these unprecedented times.

Here are some of the most important ones.

Tip 1: Avoid the knee-jerk



Given the severity and intensity of the challenges Covid-19 has created, it's easy to make quick decisions to "try and help" in any way possible. Although the instinct is noble, make sure to think through what you want to do, reach out to other social investors and utilise your resources as effectively as possible.

Tip 2: Time for real partnership

Everyone is feeling the pressure during the crisis, but the organisations working on-the-ground in vulnerable communities are feeling it much more than social investors making funding decisions. Approach everything you're doing with a sense of true partnership and support: don't make unrealistic demands, remain flexible and always be willing to listen as things evolve.



Tip 3: Engage with government

Make every effort to engage with government stakeholders, particularly at local level. Government is doing a huge amount across the country, and seeking ways to share resources and collaborate will smooth delivery and improve coordination.



Tip 4: Don't let perfect be the enemy of good

There are so many social investors and organisations doing great work all over the country, it's truly impossible to avoid all duplication. Do your best to prevent it through communication, research and engagement, but don't spend so much time on avoiding duplication that you slow down your response unnecessarily.



Tip 5: Every bit counts

At the best of times, South Africa has massive need for impactful social investment. This reality has been exponentially amplified during the pandemic. The need will always be far greater than whatever you as a social investor can do, but every effort is an important part of our national response. Keep at it!



Tip 6: Don't forget about your auditors

Even though things are urgent right now, don't forget governance and compliance. All of your decisions must still tick all the right boxes so that your audits – once all is said and done – come back clean.

