



The Hermanus Red Cross —Options for the Future?

Meeting in the Clock Room Burgundy Restaurant

Tuesday 17th January 2023

10 am-12 pm

Objective: To share ideas and explore options for the future of the Hermanus Red Cross.

Attendees: Molly Venter, Mariette Pitlo, Nelia Louw, Dee Wills, Kathie Buley, Angela Heslop, Cathy Croxton, Carmen Titus

Apologies: Theo de Meyer, Gertrud du Toit, John Irvin

Conclusions

- Following the discussions had at this meeting, the Hermanus Red Cross has decided to move forward on all three of the initiatives presented at the meeting – see below.
- The committee is looking for new members who are keen to support the new direction of the organization.
- A Food Insecurity Road Map on the way forward regarding food insecurity is under discussion. And as requested, Angela has sent an agenda to the Mayor to give the Overstrand Municipality the opportunity to be involved in the suggested Food Insecurity Road Map. She is waiting for a response.

Meeting notes

Introductions

Angela Heslop welcomed participants to the meeting, and the session started with each person introducing themselves and providing a summary of their professional work and interests.

Background

Angela described the circumstances that led to this review of the Hermanus Red Cross and its activities.

- South African Red Cross has had considerable upheaval in the past 10 years. And this situation is still not fully resolved.
- When the COVID pandemic hit, the Hermanus Red Cross was tasked to manage food distribution in the local area. While much was achieved, it faced some challenges. The key lessons learned were:
 - There was a need for improved collaboration with the Overstrand Municipality and the many NPOs and churches who assisted during this time.
 - Data collection was limited, and as a result, the real food insecurity situation was never fully understood.

Food insecurity has not gone away. Before the epidemic, research showed that in 2020 over 23 percent of South Africans were affected by **moderate** to **severe** food insecurity. This means that one in four people are skipping meals, running out of food, and going without food for at least a day or longer. Therefore, it is paramount that the Hermanus Red Cross addresses this issue by researching the food insecurity situation in the local community and responding to the findings.

Three Potential Areas of Focus for the Hermanus Red Cross

1. Let us make Hermanus a dementia-friendly community: Kathie Buley

Kathie outlined the issues and possible approaches. She application in our community. Kathy has given a number of presentations on this topic. Feedback from the community has shown there is considerable interest. There are three areas of focus.

1. Awareness and Advocacy—Eradicate stigma and empower families to improve the quality of life of patients and themselves. Publicity and awareness building.
2. Surveillance—There is a need to gather data on what is currently available in the Overstrand.
3. Advocacy—let's make Hermanus a Dementia Friendly Town
4. Prevention—It is never too late to make a difference.

2. Food Insecurity in Hermanus—A Focus for the Future: Cathy Croxton

Support activities and organizations that tackle food insecurity in the most vulnerable households. She reflected on Hermanus Red Cross food response during COVID and reiterated the core functions of the society. This was followed by a presentation on the four pillars of food insecurity and how they can impact on communities. See: <https://www.fao.org/hunger/en/>. She discussed a potential action plan for the Hermanus Red Cross, including running a pilot survey in Zwelihle to identify the real food insecurity situation on the ground and to set up a local food insecurity network within the community to collaborate and work towards tackling local food insecurity.

3. Children in the most vulnerable households in Hermanus: Molly Venter

Molly reported that she had a meeting with David Duncan, general manager of Child & Family Services. He explained that there is a big need to help vulnerable children in the Overstrand. However, they do not get the necessary support or the money to pay for a child psychologist to help these children. In addition, the social workers are overwhelmed with the number of cases they must handle and do not have the time or capacity needed. Hermanus Red Cross would like to work with Child and Family Services to address these problems.