

Eat Out Restaurant Relief Fund reaches R1m

 By [Brent Smith](#), issued by [New Media](#)

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The Restaurant Relief Fund, developed by *Eat Out* owner New Media, is currently assisting 32 restaurants in seven provinces, helping them make over half a million meals in May for hungry people across South Africa.

EAT OUT

RESTAURANT

RELIEF FUND

On 1 April, New Media made the difficult decision to pause restaurant reviews and postpone the annual Eat Out Restaurant Awards, which was due to take place in November. Just a few days into the Covid-19 lockdown, it was clear to us that eating out wouldn't be the same for a long time. Then, as the number of hungry people in South Africa increased under lockdown, we saw many cooks and restaurateurs step in to use their skills to help. Our question was: who is providing for these providers?

So we refocused our efforts on assisting the restaurant industry, which has supported our *Eat Out* brand for over 20 years, by developing and launching the Eat Out Restaurant Relief Fund in partnership with Community Chest. The fund provides financial aid to restaurants making meals for those in need and has enabled dedicated people to go back to work to make a real difference in our society.

In three weeks, as corporate and individual donations have poured in, we've been able to distribute R980,000 to 32 restaurants. This is helping them make over half-a-million meals in May for those in need across SA, feeding around 17,000 vulnerable people every day. And today we tipped over the R1m donations mark! This a brilliant milestone that inspires us to keep going with our mission.



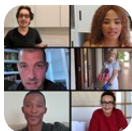
Saigon Suzy in Parkwood

New Media CEO Aileen Lamb says: “We want this fund to keep our beloved industry operating and provide much-needed financial assistance so they can reopen their doors as viable businesses when the time comes.”

New Media and Media24 seeded the fund with R500,000 and Retail Capital and Graham Beck/Steenberg Vineyards soon came on board, each donating R100,000.

Retail Capital CEO Karl Westvig says he’s supporting the initiative because “many of our restaurant owners are not trading right now but they do have facilities, and they do have staff – and many of them are using those facilities and staff to feed the hungry.”

Over the past 20 days, we’ve heard heartbreaking stories of children as young as three walking on their own to collect the only meal they’ll eat that day. But we’ve also seen beautiful moments of people pulling together, going back to work, reopening their kitchens to help those who need it, and feeling new energy that purpose brings.



Eat Out Restaurant Relief Fund launched

24 Apr 2020



For example, Café Extrablatt in Green Point, Cape Town, is cooking meals for The Haven Night Shelter. Meanwhile, Jackson’s Real Food Market and Eatery is distributing meals to vulnerable families in Johannesburg and Thava Indian Restaurant committed to feeding over 1,000 people every day from their community kitchen in Norwood, Joburg.

Chef David Schneider of Chefs Warehouse at Maison in Cape Town sums it up: “In a time where it feels like all change is bad, you get reminded that just by doing something small, by adding value to the community around you, some change is extraordinary.”

CEO of Graham Beck and Steenberg Vineyards Chris du Toit adds: “To the head chefs, the porters, the waiters and the cooks who are working to help the vulnerable at this time, thank you for choosing hope.”

The Eat Out Restaurant Relief Fund will continue to operate for as long as the need is there. Can you help? Donate at help.eatout.co.za.

ABOUT BRENT SMITH

I am the Head of Brand Communication for South Africa's leading content marketing agency, New Media, and its in-house dev agency, Swipe iX.

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