



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Emergency Fund hits \$1.1 million

**April 19, 2020** - Bermuda's Emergency Fund set up a month ago to bring relief to the community during the Covid-19 pandemic has topped the million-dollar mark. The Fund was set up to enable Third Sector organisations with the expertise and experience to obtain the resources to provide essential services during this challenging time.

"This is a massive tribute to the generosity of the community," said Dr Myra Virgil, Managing Director of the Bermuda Community Foundation which established the Fund.

"We knew that nonprofit organisations were going to be required to meet some basic needs for the community – such as food, shelter and safety. We also knew that many people would want to donate funds to help, so it made sense to create a specific fund to make it easier. The core business of the BCF is setting up and managing philanthropic funds, so we were ideally positioned to do this.

"This weekend the Emergency Fund reached \$1.1 million. And remember, this is by no means the total that has been given to help the community. Others have given directly to specific nonprofit organisations; the corporate world has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase PPE and ventilators for the hospital; Government is providing assistance to the thousands of people laid off because of the pandemic. In addition, we are all hearing the stories of individuals helping individuals – giving money and support; employers continuing to pay staff even when they can't work, because they know they are otherwise putting people into profound difficulty."

Contributions have been made to the Fund by some 100 individuals and 34 companies.

Allocations from the Fund are made based on information gathered by members of the Third Sector Coordinated Crisis Response Effort (CCRE), a group of funders and nonprofit representatives that came together to ensure a collaborative approach to the issue. Members of the team are: Bank of Bermuda Foundation, Bermuda Community Foundation, Bermuda Health Council, Inter Agency Committee, Age Concern and two independent nonprofit consultants.

"It's a privilege to be part of this group; BCF has expertise in fund management and grant making but those were not the only skills and capacities needed and we are a lean team. We all separately realized that this work in this context was going to require our combined brainpower and resources to be effective. As a group we had the best chance to make substantive impact," said Dr. Virgil.

The first job of the CCRE when it came together in mid-March was to assess two things: the resources that nonprofits would need to do the job required, and the availability of those resources. That way, those prepared to give could be coordinated and matched to a set of needs, some requiring simple cash support to key nonprofits and some requiring more time, expertise and the coordination of resources to reach a solution.

Both Dr. Virgil and BoBF Director of Programmes, Vivien Carter, represent the group on the EMO's Disaster Reduction and Risk Recovery team. "It was clear that the Third Sector's work needed to be strategically organised around the country's national disaster emergency response, so it was helpful to be connected to the EMO," said Dr. Virgil.

When it became clear that island-wide food access was a critical need, a food distribution mapping exercise was conducted in short order. It revealed that vulnerable people at the most Eastern and Western ends of the island had no access to food at all, and on some days, particularly Sundays, there was no food security at any time. This detailed work enabled these gaps to be filled.

"At this point 92% of the Emergency Fund has been allocated or deployed to the nonprofits that are supporting individuals in the community," said Dr. Virgil. "More funds will be needed, and we urge those who can help to donate. There's an awful lot of need in our community right now, and we do not know how long this situation will last. Remember, 100% of the money you donate goes to our community in need. Thank you so much."

To support the collective and coordinated effort to match and support essential service providers delivering on critical needs (as they have reported them), give to the [Emergency Fund](#). No gift is too great or too small.

For more information on contributions to the Emergency Fund from the community, go to [www.bcf.bm--COVID-19 and Other-Contributors](http://www.bcf.bm--COVID-19-and-Other-Contributors). To see a list of some of the organisations receiving funding from the Emergency Fund in prior weeks, go to [www.bcf.bm--COVID-19 and Other-Disbursements](http://www.bcf.bm--COVID-19-and-Other-Disbursements).

To learn more about the work of the Third Sector Coordinated Crisis Response effort go to <https://www.facebook.com/ThirdSectorCoordinatedCrisisResponseEffort> or [What is the CCRT](#) at [www.bcf.bm](http://www.bcf.bm).

To receive regular updates from the BCF on the COVID-19 Emergency response, write [info@bcf.bm](mailto:info@bcf.bm) to be added to the distribution list and go to [www.bcf.bm](http://www.bcf.bm) to read the BCF's past reports.

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#### **About the Bermuda Community Foundation**

The Bermuda Community Foundation's (BCF) is a limited liability and segregated accounts company, registered as Bermuda charity #948. Its mission is to create an enduring source of funds forever dedicated to the good of Bermuda. BCF aims to improve and strengthen Bermuda's social sector by assisting donors of all kinds to make the most of their generosity. As a public grantmaking foundation, its resources go towards creating a permanent asset base for the public benefit by fundraising, stewarding and investing charitable gifts from the community, grantmaking, and responsibly managing its operations. BCF was founded in 2013 by The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Buchanan Charitable Fund and RenaissanceRe with support from private donors and nonprofits that established their own endowed agency funds to be managed at the foundation. Bloomberg Philanthropies, Hemera Foundation, XL Foundation, and Meritus Trust Company also made key contributions. BCF benefits from the professional support of Conyers Dill & Pearman and from PwC who conduct a fee-reduced annual audit. For more information, please visit [www.bermudacommunityfoundation.org](http://www.bermudacommunityfoundation.org) or contact [info@bcf.bm](mailto:info@bcf.bm).

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