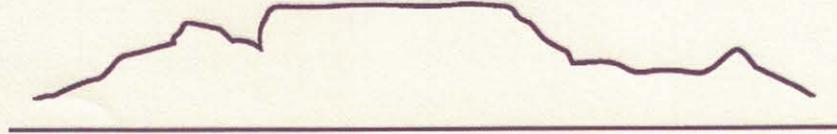




# Archdiocese of Cape Town



## STATEMENT TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN CONCERNING CATHOLIC WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (CWD)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 I wrote a letter to all priests, Deacons and Religious concerning the difficulties which have occurred at CWD, and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November I briefed the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council on the same issues. In order to ensure that this information is available to all parishioners, and in order to update the information given, I am writing this statement on the present state of affairs at CWD.

As you are no doubt aware, CWD is the welfare arm of the Archdiocese of Cape Town and was established in 1970. It has its own constitution and is governed by a Board of Management which, together with the Executive Director, is responsible for fund-raising, operations and the financial well-being of the organisation. In the almost 50 years of its existence it has achieved excellent work and many programmes, some of which are now autonomous in their own right, continue this good work.

Towards the end of 2017 I began receiving information indicating that CWD was in financial difficulty. After trying for some time to get the Board to recognize the urgency and seriousness of the situation, eventually it has become clear that CWD's financial position is very much worse than we could have imagined. I am grateful to the Archdiocesan Finance Council for their assistance in engaging with the Board and for their financial prowess.

In September 2018 the Director of CWD, Mr Kevin Roussel, was placed on suspension by the Board pending a disciplinary enquiry into charges of gross misconduct and insubordination. Subsequently, Mr Roussel chose to resign. Three other members of the CWD Management also resigned. Moreover, it came to light that the Board itself was unconstitutional as the terms of office of some members had expired. After consultation with the remaining Board, new members have been appointed. The Board then appointed an interim Director to oversee the necessary actions that have had to be taken.

In the light of the information now available, the Board had to take the difficult and distressing, but necessary, decision to cease operations and to retrench all staff in a procedural way. The Archdiocese has loaned CWD a significant amount of money, mostly to cover the salaries of almost 50 staff members for three months and to underwrite the retrenchment packages. With the authorization of the CWD Board, the Archdiocesan Finance Department has control over CWD bank accounts and any payment by CWD must be co-released by the Finance Department. Since October 2018 all donations received in the CWD accounts have been used only for projects that are operational and not for unrelated administrative expenses and salaries. Any donations received after the closure of programmes will be held in trust or returned to donors.

I am sure that you can appreciate that this has been an extremely stressful time for all involved in sorting out this incredible mess. My greatest concern is for the beneficiaries of CWD programmes

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and the staff who have been retrenched – especially those who receive lower salaries. They have suffered greatly over the past months and now face an uncertain future.

Despite all these difficulties and the horrible prospect of unemployment, a number of staff members have volunteered their time and labour to participate in procuring, packing and distributing this year's Buckets of Love to those even less fortunate than themselves. Their generosity and selflessness is indicative of the majority of staff members who have worked at CWD over the past 48 years. I want to thank them and the donors who have given so generously to the Buckets of Love. This campaign will be the last of CWD for the foreseeable future.

Once the administrative mess has been sorted out, attention will be given for the future of the welfare outreach of the Archdiocese.

Finally, I appeal to you to please keep CWD, their beneficiaries and retrenched employees in your prayers at this time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Brislin", with a horizontal line underneath it. A small asterisk is written to the left of the signature.

+Stephen Brislin  
Archbishop of Cape Town

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018