

MEDIA RELEASE

Severely Disadvantaged School In The Valley Of 1 000 Hills Receives A R365 000 Make-over

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A severely under-resourced secondary school in the Valley of 1 000 Hills, on Durban's urban fringes which has long battled deteriorating and collapsing infrastructure and faulty electricity wiring has been afforded a new lease of life, the result of a recent R365 000 repairs and renovations make-over, thanks to the intercession of the South African Muslim Charitable Trust (SAMCT).

In an address during the official hand-over of the re-vamped school, SAMCT representative, Mr Gaf Osman, said the make-over had made 'a very real difference to the school.

"There can be no question that it is extremely difficult to teach effectively and for learners to absorb what they are being taught when the infrastructure around them is in a state of disrepair and faulty wiring results in periodic power cuts to classrooms. This was clearly a most demoralising situation for teachers and learners alike and they are to be applauded for refusing to allow such a state of dilapidation to get them down. Instead, teachers and learners have long worked around the school's deficiencies.

In spite of the challenges faced by the school - responsible for more than 500 learners - and the lack of finance to ensure its proper maintenance, Mr Osman said the school had reflected an upward trajectory, taking pass rates from just 34% to 80% in 2017 and to 93% in 2018.

"Although, the loss of several key teachers in 2019, resulted in a results slip to 85%, the school is again showing its mettle and improving results year-on-year. We firmly believe that a fit and proper education is the right of every child and that this provides the foundation for success in life. Regrettably, many of our province's learners - especially those in semi-rural and rural locations, such as this - simply do not enjoy the fair and equal educational opportunities they deserve."

Mr Osman added: "It is critical that every effort is made to upgrade severely under-resourced schools throughout KwaZulu-Natal, affording both teachers and learners comfortable, functional learning environments, properly equipped with the tools and equipment to facilitate their education. Only then will our historically disadvantaged young people enjoy the same advantages as their urban counterparts."

He said: "They must be given every opportunity to grow themselves, ready for an improved quality of life in the future. The longer schools remain under-resourced and be allowed to degenerate into a state of disrepair, the more difficult it will be for their learners to derive a sound and effective education. We should be looking to create the best possible learning environments, instilling the best possible teaching techniques and employing the best possible educational tools in our semi-rural and rural schools in order that all our country's children are afforded equal entrepreneurial and employment opportunities upon leaving school."

He maintained that education was the answer to the poverty trap, which still affects so many South African communities today.

"The South African Muslim Charitable Trust was exceptionally pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute towards transforming Maqhutshana Secondary School from a state of total dilapidation to one in which both teachers and learners may now take pride. We of the South African Muslim Charitable Trust absolutely recognise the vital role education plays and that this is the only way forward for the learners of both today and tomorrow. Therefore, the undertaking of much needed painting, the replacement of windows and doors and the provision of desks for learners, as well as correcting faulty wiring and combining the compute centre with the administration facility was an imperative for our organisation and, I am pleased to say, the resultant transformation will stand the school in good stead as it continues its upward development and results trajectory," Mr Osman stressed.

The SAMCT, which was created in 2008, was established to provide funding, services and other resources for the improvement of the lives of vulnerable, deprived and disadvantaged. It has successfully delivered sizeable assistance solutions throughout the country, irrespective of race or religion and works to support needy organisations in the fields of health, social development, poverty alleviation and education.

"It is our hope now that our repairs and renovations intervention here at Maqhutshana Secondary School will make a tangible difference to both teaching and learning here, affording learners every opportunity to develop to their full potential," he concluded.

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For more information about SAMCT and its Secondary School repairs and renovations make-over donation, please contact:

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