

MINERALS COUNCIL FEATURE: #MININGMATTERS

UMK brings hope and learning to rural community



The Thariemang Early Childhood Development Centre project, supported by UMK, is an oasis of childhood learning in the farming village of Nchwaneng, in the Joe Morolong Local Municipality of the Northern Cape's Kuruman district.

This beautifully appointed educational facility was built by United Manganese of Kalahari (UMK) and, at its official opening, General Manager Joe Mosupyoe explained the genesis of his company's exciting undertaking: "Our first step with such projects is to engage with local municipalities, in order to understand their integrated developmental plans. That way, our initiatives are keenly focused and targeted, and fit in with the bigger picture of the community's needs. This, then, becomes a part of our social labour plan projects."

Surrounded by a colourful and stimulating environment, Mosupyoe looked with pride and satisfaction upon the happy young learners, who have been provided with cheerful, bright blue uniforms. Their glee was apparent and inspirational to the gathered teachers and parents.

"Early education is a vital stepping stone for young children," he continued, "And we feel gratified that we are able to make a difference in the lives of children who don't necessarily have the same means and access as their counterparts in urban and suburban districts." Mosupyoe stressed, gravely, "Studies have shown that, when children get to middle school and even primary school, they are often not literate or numerate. Projects such as this, however, provide the young students with these essentials of learning, thus enabling them to flourish into Primary, Middle, and High School."

"At these early stages of development," said Mosupyoe, "a child's mind is impressionable and sponge-like; waiting to receive information and build on it. Overlooking this crucial time of early learning starts children off with an enormous burden of playing 'catch up', whilst their counterparts in the cities thrive and grow."

"We at UMK want to ensure that we leave a lasting legacy in our communities," Mosupyoe concluded, "and initiatives such as the Thariemang Early Childhood Development Centre project feed into our company's culture of sustainability. You can't build a community's culture in a vacuum. It has to start with the children."



"We feel gratified that we are able to make a difference in the lives of children who don't necessarily have the same means and access as their counterparts in urban and suburban districts." Joe Mosupyoe - General Manager



BRINGING HOPE AND LEARNING TO RURAL COMMUNITY

WWW.UMK.CO.ZA

