

# More than just a shoe - Illovo Sugar SA partners with agri ministers to donate school shoes

"Our children are our future and one of the basic responsibilities is to care for them in the best and most compassionate manner possible," said former President Nelson Mandela.

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It is in this spirit of caring and protecting children that Illovo Sugar South Africa, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development, donated 580 pairs of school shoes to schools within the KwaZulu-Natal region.

The sound of children's gleeful laughter greeted Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development Thoko Didiz as she handed out school shoes and gardening tools to pupils.

Ricky Govender, managing director of Illovo Sugar South Africa, said Illovo is committed to building a thriving South African community and education is an important part of that. Donations of school shoes are in support of improving education outcomes to create a thriving South African community.

"A school shoe provides protection in the rough, unforgiving terrain of gravel roads in rural areas, provides dignity and enhances confidence, which will have a positive impact on education outcomes."

Govender said by donating the school shoes, learners were empowered on their journey towards a brighter future.

"With the new school shoes, we say you too can walk tall. We say you too can achieve all your dreams.

"We are a long-term contributor to the area's economy, committed to partnering for the continuing transformation of agricultural and sugar production sectors. Supporting our local schools and education is core to the shared value principle for our business," he said.



Minister Didiza said many parents in rural areas had lost their jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic and were unable to provide even basic necessities. She said the gardening tools will be used to establish food gardens at schools that local communities can benefit from.

“We welcome the collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and Illovo Sugar South Africa to extend a helping hand to the pupils at the various schools around KwaZulu-Natal.

“This is part of a nationwide campaign by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to make life more comfortable for rural people, especially children who are our future leaders.

“We wish to take this opportunity to call on more organisations such as Illovo Sugar South Africa in the private sector to raise their hands because government is not in a position to close every gap and to meet every need.

“However, by joining hands in partnership, the public and private sectors can work together to rebuild this country brick by brick,” Minister Didiza said.

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