
AfriSam provides lapdesks to aid learning in Verulam

Monday, 6 June 2011 - AfriSam has donated 790 lapdesks to the learners of Mjoji and Ogunjini Primary Schools in Verulam, Durban. The lapdesks were handed over at two ceremonies held at the respective schools on Monday 6 June 2011.

This contribution is aimed at addressing shortages around learning tools and equipment that exist at under-resourced schools. The two schools were selected as they are located in close proximity to AfriSam's aggregate operation in the area.

"This initiative is in line with our Corporate Social Responsibility mission to understand the needs of society and communities in areas where we do business in order to make meaningful and sustainable contributions to their upliftment," says Tsholo Diale, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager for AfriSam South Africa.

The lapdesk, which is made from durable and non-toxic materials, allows a learner to use it on a chair or on their lap and has relevance for 30% of the school-going population – these children are either taught under trees or attend schools where desks are in short supply or damaged.

Through monitoring and evaluation, the Lapdesk Company has established an immediate benefit to the wellbeing of the learner through posture correction and an 80% rise in concentration levels. Teachers also report an improvement in writing quality as children now have a flat surface wide enough to carry a notebook and a textbook. The ownership model is also unique in that the lapdesk is donated to the learner as opposed to the school, allowing the child to take the device home where a working surface for homework is typically not available.

While the lapdesk was intended to serve as a temporary intervention, the rate at which government and private sector stakeholders have been able to respond to the needs of impoverished schools has not kept pace with enrolments.

AfriSam believes the lapdesk provides immediate impact and facilitates the continuation of learning while a more comprehensive development plan for the school can be drawn up.

“We believe that this intervention, which aims to aid learners at the lower education levels, will go a long way in addressing a number of problems such as skills shortage and unemployment, for the future operational benefit of business and industry in South Africa,” says Diale.

Note to editor:

AfriSam has an intensive CSR programme with a focus on education and conservation. The company is involved in various educational projects nationwide, with the objective of empowering and equipping communities with the knowledge and skills, as well as providing them with the tools and facilities to become self-reliant and sustainable.

The company’s overall **Community Involvement mission** is to understand the needs of society and communities in areas where it does business to make meaningful and sustainable contributions to their upliftment.

ABOUT AFRISAM (PTY) LTD

Founded as Anglovaal Portland Cement Company Limited in 1934, AfriSam is today the leading black-controlled building construction materials group in southern Africa. With operations in South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland the company has nearly 2 000 employees and an annual production capacity of over four million tons of

cement. It has six cement production facilities, eight cement depots, 16 quarries and aggregate operations, 40 readymix concrete plants and a Ground Granulated Blast Furnace Slag (GGBFS) milling plant. The company also has a 62.5 percent interest in Tanzania-based and listed, Tanga Cement Company.

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