



AFRICA FOUNDATION



CLASSROOMS WOULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Kwajobe Community, Kwazulu Natal



Meet Mandla Molefe. He will greet you strolling through the dust of his school's unpaved playground in his immaculate suit and tie with finely polished brown shoes. Mandla Molefe is a man of high principal - literally. He is the headmaster of the Mthambalala Secondary School in the KwaJobe community outside Phinda.

Although his calm and measured manner belies it, he is a deeply frustrated man with an infinite well of patience, for Mr Molefe is a successful teacher who has been appointed to head a school that is only half completed.

In 2007, when the department of education finally conceded that another high school was needed in the area, they managed to stretch their resources to build just four simple classrooms for some 180 children - handed over rough and unfinished. Another room, with bare plastered walls and uneven floors serves as an office for all three teachers to share with the principal.

The result is that each day, because Mr Molefe does not have the facilities to provide Grades 11 and 12, pupils who have passed Grade 10 have to walk 7 kilometres to Mabendleni High School, the community's only other secondary school. What is worse, the Mabendleni school is hopelessly overcrowded already and desperately needs a further 13 classrooms.





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Mr Molefe will tell you: 'It is frustrating to see young learners who we have built up over three years not achieve their full potential. It is hard enough for them to have to walk miles to reach the other high schools, but now they must also adapt to new teachers and new surroundings.'

'Since I came here I have found that these kids really want to learn and make the most of their lives. They are fantastic - when you teach them they really respond. The problem is with the resources. We need just six furnished classrooms to provide Grade 11 and 12. That would take some pressure off Mabandleni - and with each classroom we get an additional teacher from the government - one for each 35 pupils.'

Before Mr Molefe left his teaching post to lead this new school as principal, he was achieving near 100% pass rates in Math in a region where the average pass rate had previously struggled to exceed 5%. 'One of my ex-students is writing his pilot's license this year in Pretoria.'

For a boy from a cattle post this is remarkable. I am a role model for these children, and it doesn't matter how dusty my shoes get at the end of each day - I want to teach these children not to give up.'

Help Africa Foundation make it possible for Mandla Molefe at Mthambalala and his colleagues at Mabandleni to build the classrooms they need to get secondary education up to scratch in KwaJobe.

Help us provide the £145,000 that will enable him to do his job and turn out more pilots and professionals and young people who can achieve and will not give up!

