

Families given new homes

ARCELORMITTAL: *The foundation has built 36 houses since 2009*

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THE ArcelorMittal South African Foundation in partnership with Habitat for Humanity handed over 10 new homes to needy families in Orange Farm, south of Johannesburg on March 31.

The 10 families lived in shacks before being gifted with a new home. The steel-maker's 600 employees were joined by 11 international colleagues from countries as Macedonia, Ukraine, France, Spain, Brazil, Argentina, Poland and Czech Republic in a long week project to build houses.

The foundation launched the Solidarity Holidays Programme in 2011 to offer the employees the opportunity of spending part of their annual leave volunteering in a Foundation project overseas.

"It is gratifying that 10 more homes were built for needy families in Orange Farm," acting manager, and corporate social investment head Maggie Mopedi said.

Mopedi said to date, 26 homes have been built and as a company they are humbled and equally proud to be part of changing the lives of families in need. She is also proud of the energy and drive

shown by staff locally and internationally, she added that camaraderie and comradeship makes the hard work so much easier and fun.

This year is the fourth year the foundation has partnered with global non-governmental organisation (NGO) Habitat for Humanity to provide homes in one of Gauteng's underdeveloped areas.

The foundation has built 36 homes since 2009. One of the special highlights was a 101-year-old granny who was handed the keys to her first house four years ago.

"The organisations partnership with ArcelorMittal SA has changed lives for most of the families in Orange Farm," Gauteng habitat for humanity manager Trevor Molefe said.

He said the foundation has provided decent housing for more than 180 people in the area. Orange Farm informal settlement started in 1988 and formally established in 1990. Today it has almost a million residents. Most of them are on very low incomes, affected by Aids, and the lack of access to decent sanitation or water.