

Ten disadvantaged families given new houses



A joint effort for the needy



One of the houses which are near completion in Blaauwbosch

ArcelorMittal Foundation handed over 10, two-bedroom 40m, Protea houses to selected families in Blaauwbosch last week Friday.

The week long project, which forms a part of ArcelorMittal Foundation's Solidarity Holidays initiative, will help with the lack of adequate housing for the 10 disadvantaged families in the area.

According to Maggie Mopedi, ArcelorMittal Foundation Correspondent, Manager of Corporate Social Responsibility, the aim of the initiative is to offer ArcelorMittal employees across the world, the opportunity of spending part of their annual leave volunteering in a Foundation project in a country different from their own.

"During this year's Solidarity Holiday, ArcelorMittal international volunteers from ten countries including Italy, Brazil, France, Spain, Belgium, Czech Republic, India and Germany, together with thirty nine local volunteers and some members of the ArcelorMittal South Africa management team, contributed towards building six houses," she said.

She explained that four out of the 10 houses were built in December 2013, through a partnership with the local community and government stakeholders, who identified the need to make provision for housing. "The beneficiaries of the houses who were selected from the Department of Social Development's database and are mostly child headed households who lived in dilapidated one bedroom mud houses or shacks that are unstable and unfit for human habitation," explained Mopedi.

The Mdlalose family is one such family that benefited from the solidarity project, with four children who have lost both their parents and are currently in the care of their older sister who is unemployed. The family previously lived in a one-room mud house and had previously been victims of a natural disaster.

"The Foundation has presence in 29 countries and we plan to organise nine Solidarity Holiday projects in 2014. We fully believe that the week spent in Newcastle by our employees will not only be beneficial to the community of Blaauwbosch but it will also encourage others to make a positive contribution in less privileged communities across South Africa," concluded Felicidad Cristobal, CEO of the ArcelorMittal Foundation.