



rural development & land reform

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PHAPHAMANI PRIMARY SCHOOL - A SHINING LIGHT IN KWA-NGEMA VILLAGE

By Zithini Dlamini

The vision of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) is to build vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities.

It is in this effort that over two years ago, on 6 June 2016, the Deputy Minister of the DRDLR, Ms Candith Mashego Dlamini, officially handed over the Phaphamani Primary School to the then MEC for Education in the Mpumalanga province, Ms Regina Mhaule. The R19 million school has since become a shining light of Kwa-Ngema village where it is situated.

The school has created job opportunities and has alleviated from the clutches of poverty five local women and one man. Two of the women are employed through the community public works programme of the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) to clean the school premises. In the kitchen, there is an additional number of three women who assist with the School's Nutrition Programme. "Our job is made easier by the use of the modern equipment which we have in the kitchen. The kitchen facilities make it convenient for us to prepare meals in an environment that is enabling and to keep non-perishable food items safely locked away in the storage room," said one of the women. Then there is one man who is employed as a general worker of the school. One of the workers', Ms Thembani Khumalo's, grandchild also attends Grade R at Phaphamani Primary School. Ms Khumalo commends the school for the special care they give to learners including those in Grade R.

The empowerment of women is often cited as a key factor in the economic advancement of a country. According to the Statistician-General, Mr Risenga Maluleke, who spoke at the quarterly labour force results in February 2018, the unemployment rate for women is higher than that of men, and women are less likely to participate in the labour market. Mr Maluleke further explained that black women are the most vulnerable, sitting at 34.2% followed by coloured women at 23.5%. White women were the least affected at 6.7%.

The provision of the proper building for learners has contributed towards a positive outlook of life for the community of Kwa-Ngema and has given them a sense of pride. The School Governing Body (SGB)'s Chairperson, Mr Bhekana Khumalo, said that the local communities are the caretakers of the school., They

are always keeping an eye, which makes their oversight role as the SGB committee easy. As the SGB, they promote the best interest of the school and ensure its development. "It is very unlikely to find a learner in school uniform outside the school's premises during school hours. The school instils discipline and the SGB upholds it by ensuring that no learner is founding roaming around," added Mr Khumalo.

When the DRDLR intervened, the school had no proper infrastructure as the learners were accommodated in prefabricated structures and shacks which posed a risk when there were strong winds or storms. Kwa-Ngema village is prone to harsh weather conditions. The old school building was damaged flat to the ground by hailstorms in 2008 and the DRDLR came to the rescue by building a modern structure on par with those in urban areas.

The school boasts an impressive pass rate of more than 85% on average. Based on their annual performance, the percentage has been consistent over the past three years. Phaphamani Primary School attracts learners, not only from its immediate surroundings but from neighbouring communities too. Almost all of the 300 households have their children enrolled at Phaphamani, but what is of interest is that the school has also attracted educators' children from other schools. This information came out during a visit to one of the neighbouring local residents. Ms Khalishwayo (65) says the school stands out because of the quality of education learners receive and the care given to them by the educators.



The structure is still well maintained

Departement van Landelike Ontwikkeling en Grondhervorming - UMnyango Wezokuthukiswa Kwezindawo
Zasemakhaya Nezinguquko Kwezomhlaba - Muhasho wa Mveledziso ya Mahayani na Mbuyedzedzo ya Mavu - Ndzawulo
ya Nhluvukiso wa Matikoxikaya na Antswiso wa Misava - Lefapha la Tlhabololo ya Magae le Ntshwafatso ya Mafatshe -
Lefapha la Tlhabollo ya Dibaka tsa Mahae - Kgoro ya Tlhabollo ya Dinagamagae le Peakanyoleswa ya Naga - iSebe
loPhuhliso lwamaPhandle noBuyekezo lwemiHlaba - UmNyango wokuThuthukisa iiNdawo zemaKhaya nokuBuyiselwa
kweNarha - Litiko Letekutfukiswa KwentindzawoTasemaphandleni Netingucuko Kutemhlaba