



**NEW BOOKS:** Pupils at Sophakama Primary School celebrate after receiving books from pupils at Elkanah Primary School as Mandela Day gifts.



**GOOD TO GROW:** School head Sabelo Makubalo, general assistant Mzoxolo Keyise, gardener Lungusani Sigoxo and Irené Raubenheimer in the school's vegetable garden.



**OVERALL SUCCESS:** Makubalo with new overalls for workers at the school, donated by Rogz. Such small 'wins' build trust and improve morale, he says.



**GOING UP:** New buildings are under construction and are expected to be finished in December. The 1 500 pupils are currently housed in 38 temporary structures.

# Two heads always better than one

A partnership with a businessman is helping a headmaster in Dunoon to lift his school to new heights

JAN CRONJE

PRINCIPAL Sabelo Makubalo has chosen to be interviewed in his car, the only quiet space on the grounds of Sophakama Primary School in Dunoon.

The plan works well. When he sees a staff member walking past with a document that needs his attention, he calls her over and she hands it to him through the window, like a hawkler selling a cooldrink at a traffic light.

Makubalo is using his car as an impromptu office because his school has been temporarily moved into 38 mobile classrooms while larger brick and mortar premises are built.

"It should be finished by December 12 this year," he says.

Pupils and staff can hardly wait. Not only will the new school have more space, but the area now housing the mobile classrooms will be turned into sportsfields.

With limited funds, the school's temporary new home is practical and basic.

The 38 neat mobile units – raised 0.5m off the ground to stop water seeping in – are laid out in a grid pattern along the side of paved quads where pupils play at break time.



**HELPING HAND:** Irené Raubenheimer, the co-founder of Rogz, has for the past year shared his management skills with voluntary headmaster Sabelo Makubalo. PICTURES: JAN CRONJE

When pupil numbers increased by 200 at the start of this year, the teachers' common room was converted into an extra classroom. The school now has 1 500 pupils. Sophakama Primary School, which caters to the growing population of

Dunoon and its surrounding areas, is a Section 20 school, which means it charges no fees.

"If we have any shortfalls we need to fundraise ourselves, which is not easy in this community," says Makubalo.

A trial with school fees fell flat when parents couldn't afford to pay.

Only one mobile room remains for the staff, which the secretary also shares with the school's three photocopy machines.

For the past year, Makubalo

has been able to consult with businessman Irené Raubenheimer, one of the co-founders of the successful Cape Town pet product company Rogz, about the difficulties facing his school. Makubalo and Raubenheimer have been

"partnered" through Partners for Possibility, an NGO that pairs business leaders with school principals, with the goal of improving schools in disadvantaged areas.

The business leaders seek to better the school governance and management capabilities of the principals, while they in turn work in communities they may never otherwise have visited.

"I have introduced him to so many people here in Dunoon," says Makubalo. "When he comes here he is free. He doesn't feel like a tourist in his own country."

The pair started working together in June last year. Since then they have fleshed out long-term goals for the school in teambuilding workshops, strategic planning sessions and back-and-forth visits between Raubenheimer's Montague Gardens factory and the school.

The partnership has also debunked assumptions on both sides.

Makubalo says when he first met Raubenheimer in June last year, some of his staff were wary of the businessman's motives.

For Raubenheimer, the expectation of quick results evaporated when he started to fully understand the

challenges the school faced.

In consultation with the teachers, they have set four objectives for the school: to improve reading comprehension, better remedial support for slow learners, to investigate whether the language of tuition should be changed from isiXhosa to English, and to expand the arts and culture department.

"We can't start marching before we have a strategic plan," says Raubenheimer. "And the plan needs buy-in." "The idea is not for the business partner to come to the rescue. The idea is to 'take the high road and build capacity'."

Both Raubenheimer and Makubalo say that change – which Partners for Possibility defines as improving the quality of education – will take years. For Louise van Rhyn, the energetic head of Partners for Possibility, principals must drive change at schools.

"The difference between schools that work and schools that don't is that there is an equipped principal," she told Weekend Argus.

By "equipped" she means principals must have a "unique" set of skills that include budgeting, management, human

resources, interacting with staff and team development.

Often, she says, they have received no new training, and some feel overwhelmed and disillusioned.

Business leaders, she says, can help. The organisation has partnered about 180 principals and business leaders, the majority in the Western Cape.

Her organisation provides the partners with a structured programme of 150 hours for the first year of a partnership, including 40 hours of formal training courses.

And the principals teach the businessmen as much as they learn.

"The learning process is entirely reciprocal, and all participants grow from the encounters," states the organisation.

While Makubalo and Raubenheimer fine-tune their long-term strategy, they have started with "quick wins".

A donated jungle gym was installed, the vegetable garden was made bigger, more school computers were connected to the internet, the choir was taken on trips, uniforms were given to workers.

These all build trust, says Makubalo and Raubenheimer. Without it, nothing can work.

jan.cronje@inl.co.za

## W Cape plugs into sun and wind for our power grid



**WIND POWER:** Assembling a wind turbine at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. PICTURE: CINDY WAXA

KRISTEN VAN SCHIE

IN THE same week that an R80 million solar panel factory opened in Cape Town, a crane in Bellville's industrial area slowly lifted the components of a 2.5 megawatt (MW) wind turbine into place.

"To get a full-sized wind turbine for training purposes in South Africa is such a great benefit," said Howard Fawkes, project manager of CPUT's SA Renewable Technology Centre (Saretec). Around the crane, construction on the facility was still under way, preparing for the centre's opening, scheduled for February.

When complete, it will offer specialised occupational qualifications for technicians servicing wind turbines and solar photovoltaic (PV) panels.

And to get a real-life turbine to practise on – donated by the German Development Agency GIZ and

German company Nordex – was a first for Africa, said Hawkes.

"South Africa is acquiring many hundreds of megawatts every year from renewable energy projects," he said. "That needs to be installed, operated and maintained – and right now, we're importing those skills. We'll be training local technicians to do the job."

The turbine's installation came two days after Chinese company Jinko Solar opened a factory in Epping, capable of producing up to 1 300 PV panels per day, and creating 250 new jobs.

And not for nothing did the company's head of business development in Africa, Wido Schnabel, call the Western Cape "the leading green province".

"So far in the Western Cape, we've done really well in attracting developers," said Mike Mulcahy, operations manager of GreenCape, a provincial government agency

set up to promote the green economy here.

Last year, German company SMA Solar Technology announced that it would set up a Western Cape factory producing solar inverters, which convert the direct current (DC) output of the solar panel into the alternating current of the grid.

In 2012, AEG Power Solutions opened a factory in Milnerton, also producing solar inverters.

And in June, construction began on a factory to build tower masts for wind turbines as part of what will be the Green Technology Industrial Park in Atlantis.

Mulcahy said pre-feasibility work was under way to make Atlantis a special economic zone for green technology.

"The Western Cape really is becoming a hub for renewable energy and green technology," said Mulcahy.

It's all in line with the depart-

ment of energy's plans of sourcing an extra 3 725MW from renewable energy to help keep our electricity supply uninterrupted, some of them from independent power producers.

The final two of five rounds of project bidding will end this month and next May, but of the successful projects announced so far, nine have been from the Western Cape.

These include:

- The SlimSun Swartland solar park, contributing 5MW.
- The 37-turbine strong Hopefield wind farm in Saldanha Bay, with a capacity of about 66MW.
- The Dassiesklip wind energy facility near Clarendon, contributing about 26MW.
- The West Coast One wind energy project near Vredenburg, with 94MW. And Eskom's own Sere Wind Farm with 46 turbines, also on the West Coast.

kristen.vanschie@inl.co.za

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Service Provider(s) are invited to submit proposals to provide Student Accommodation for the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) students, commencing January 2015. The term of the leases will be subject to negotiation.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM NUMBER OF BEDS:**  
60 per property

**MINIMUM STANDARD REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS:**  
Refer to Appendix E of "Report on the ministerial committee for the review of the provision of student housing at South African universities", September 2011, also available on the CPUT website under <http://goo.gl/9KsoQl>

**STUDENT HOUSING ACCREDITATION**  
Interested parties can also apply for their accommodation facilities to be accredited by CPUT. The aim is to create a database of accredited accommodation that will be accessible to CPUT students.

**BRIEFING SESSION**  
Date: 13 August 2014  
Time: 11:00  
Venue: Conference Room, New Science Building, Bellville Campus

**PRESENTATIONS**  
CPUT reserves the right to invite entities that have expressed interest, for presentations before awarding the bid.

**CLOSING DATE AND TIME**  
Friday, 22 August 2014 at 14:00

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE PROPOSAL, PLEASE CONTACT  
Residence Business Manager: **JOHNNY BASSON**  
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