

# Dreamfields brings hope to Vosloorus youth

Saturday, 22 February signalled the beginning of a powerful long-term commitment between the Vosloorus community, Dreamfields and the Chevrolet Ute Force initiative.



Vosloorus, a township near Johannesburg, was selected because of the incredible demand on the schools within the community, due to the fact that it is one of the poorest areas in the province, with the children often paying the highest price - their dreams.

Vosloorus has a total population of approximately 163,000 residents, the majority of residents living below the breadline, unemployed and in unsafe living conditions. Children walk long distances to get to and from school, many not being able to afford taxi fares. Somehow their spirit of hope lives on and they continue to attend school regularly, participate in sport and help their families with day-to-day chores.

## Impact of poverty

John Makeke, a local teacher at Bopang-Kgotso Primary School in Vosloorus, witnesses first hand the impact of poverty on a child's spirit. Makeke is working together with Dreamfields and the Chevrolet Ute Force to bring joy and hope to the lives of primary school children through the game of soccer.

He points out that since the introduction of the Dreamfields project into the community in 2013, children involved have shown a heightened passion for the game and a stronger sense of community. "Often we have to help children get back home after school as they have missed the only transport they have access too, because they wanted to play soccer with their friends after their lessons," added the teacher and chairman for sport at Bopang-Kgotso Primary School.

### Special needs school

Ten local primary schools, currently within a soccer league developed by Dreamfields, will be supported by the partnership and receive DreamBags that include soccer equipment and kit to help extend the DreamLeague into its second year. A dedicated all-girls soccer league will also form part of the 2014 project, with four girls teams starting the season in March.

The inclusion of Isipho Sethu LSEN School, a special needs institution in Vosloorus, taking care of 800 pupils, is an achievement only made possible through the dedication of both the Dreamfields and Chevrolet Ute Force teams.

Highly involved in sport already, the school has managed to start breaking down stereotypes in the local community about intellectually impaired learners. It is clear that through soccer these young South African's have found their true calling, and through the project children will receive DreamBags to help extend this important platform.

## **Giving positive dreams**

"Our vision is to create and grow primary school football in a way that allows children to play week in and week out, the first step towards building a sustainable love of sport," says Dreamfields founder John Perlman. "If we can reach out to this age group, right now, and add joy and purpose to their lives, we have a great chance of giving them the kind of positive dreams that will keep them away from drugs, crime and violence later on."

Chevrolet will further extend the footprint of their global partnership with One World Futbol, by donating the Virtually Indestructible Futbol, the ball that never needs a pump and never goes flat, even if its been punctured multiple times, allowing children to play almost anywhere.

Tim Hendon, Chevrolet Brand Manager added that Vosloorus is the fourth community impacted so far by the Dreamfields and Chevrolet Ute Force partnership with three additional projects identified for roll-out in 2014. "The Chevrolet Ute Force initiative is focused on supporting the youth. We partner with organisations to extend our reach into communities across the country."

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