

# Close to 3,000 pairs of Bata Toughees for learners affected by KZN floods

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Learners whose lives were uprooted in the devastating floods in KwaZulu-Natal received some relief this month in the form of new school shoes, donated by Toughees, part of local footwear giant, Bata South Africa.



Toughees partnered with NPO Kasi Angels to ensure that the donated school shoes reached learners in flood affected areas of eThekweni including Mayville, Clermont, Springfield, Lamontville, Wiggins, Marianhill, KwaNdengezi, Inanda, Phoenix, Verulam, Umbumbulu, Umkomaas and Umlazi, as well as KwaDukuza and Pietermaritzburg.

The heavy flooding in the province killed some 450 people, left more than 40,000 homeless and damaged schools and infrastructure, affecting over 270,000 learners in the province.

With Bata South Africa's head office and main distribution centre based in KwaZulu-Natal, Managing Director, Michael Wyatt, said the company had been saddened to see the devastating impact of the flooding on lives and livelihoods.

"Bata Toughees regularly donates school shoes to alleviate the burden on disadvantaged school children as part of the Bata Children's Programme (BCP). Through our partnership with Kasi Angels we are pleased to have been able to spring into action to assist destitute learners following the catastrophic

floods," he said.



Bata also recently donated gumboots to NPO The Litterboom Project (TLP), for volunteers and staff involved in beach clean-ups in KZN following the flooding disaster.

Kasi Angels was founded by Gerald Nomlala, whose first-hand experience of going to school barefoot as a youngster has led to his mission to find shoes for thousands of pupils from disadvantaged families across the country.



At Ziphembeleni Secondary School in Inanda township, where learners received Bata Toughes, school Principal, Bongsi Mthembu said: "Many learners' homes were washed away and they are still living in community halls. Most of their uniforms were also washed away. Even before the floods we had a problem with learners with unemployed parents attending school without school uniforms and the floods made the situation a lot worse. We are so grateful that Bata has donated school shoes to our learners."

Head girl, Anele Mphuthi, added, "Getting school shoes means a lot to our school. Some learners were not coming to school because they did not have uniforms and school shoes. Others came in casual clothes, which does not go with the school code of conduct. We are so happy to get school shoes because now every learner will feel they can come to school."





The global BCP focuses on four key areas of children's development where Bata believes it can make a difference: education, health and safety, living in a sustainable world and mentoring and skills.

From building new schools and classrooms to donating shoes and running support initiatives throughout the year, the BCP strives to positively impact the lives of South African children and those around them.

Visit <https://www.bata.co.za/about-us/bata-childrens-programme/> to learn more about the Bata BCP and how the footwear company is tackling children's global concerns locally, to create a brighter future, today.

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