

20,000 'home-sewn' face masks delivered to Alex community

The Youth Employment Service (YES) and Exemplar REITail have partnered in creating and donating 'home-sewn' face masks to vulnerable township communities across South Africa.



Image source: www.pixabay.com

The partnership will see Alex-based seamstresses earning an income through the making of these masks. “We are proud of this partnership and the contribution to the protection of these communities while supporting and stimulating township economies during this very difficult time,” says Dr Tashmia Ismail-Saville, YES chief executive.

#MasksforGood is an awareness campaign being rolled out nationally to encourage as many South Africans as possible to “#maskup”.

“As we navigate this pandemic, we are doing everything in our power to protect our communities. #MasksforGood is just another of the many steps we have already taken to protect those that don’t necessarily have the means to protect themselves,” says CEO of Exemplar Jason McCormick.

Distribution from Alex Mall

Alex Mall in Alexandra, Gauteng will be the pilot project for the distribution of masks to the community. The initial roll out of masks is being funded exclusively by personal donations from Exemplar staff and senior management. The first 20,000 masks are anticipated to be distributed by mid-April and thereafter a campaign will be driven via crowdfunding as the initiative is rolled out across numerous other townships and rural areas.

Each participating seamstress is being supplied with 50m of medical grade cotton fabric, a pattern and instructions on how to sew the masks. Armed with only a pair of scissors and a sewing machine, they will be able to sew in excess of 1000 masks each. Exemplar will then buy the completed masks back directly from these township entrepreneurs, helping stimulate the local economies within which they operate. The re-usable, washable masks (with care instructions) will then be distributed to the vulnerable communities surrounding the various #MasksforGood initiatives countrywide.

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