

# Prieska old age home gets support from Mulilo Sonnedix

Mulilo Sonnedix Prieska PV Solar Farm has donated R200,000 in new beds, bedding and kitchen equipment to the impoverished Huis Pickard old age home in Prieska in the Northern Cape.

In addition, the 72 elderly and disabled residents were treated to a Christmas lunch, where they received gifts and enjoyed festive season performances by the local primary school children.

Huis Pickard chairman and caretaker, William van Staden, said that the elderly residents were delighted and felt appreciated. "We have insufficient funding and looking after the residents is a challenge. This support will go a long way towards making their lives more comfortable."



Huis Pickard residents are treated to a Christmas party.

Prieska deputy mayor, Jakob Basson, thanked Sonnedix, juwi and Mulilo for their involvement in the social upliftment of the community. "Today we are in a position to put food on the table for Christmas, and it is for us such a pleasure to assure you that from the municipality side we will do everything that we can to make things easier for you. I hope that this is not the last time we gather together but that this is the beginning of a long relationship between us, our council, the municipality and all our stakeholders."

## First of many projects

The gesture is the first of many community projects planned for the area. Mulilo Sonnedix Prieska PV is building an 86MWp solar farm near Coppertown and Prieska, and as owners and developers of the project, the organisation has committed to spending approximately R1.5m per annum for the next 20 years on community social upliftment and investment in the region.

"We plan to invest approximately R30m into community programmes over the duration of the solar PV project to improve their quality of life. We are committed to supporting the community that has enabled the solar farm in the long term," explains Sonnedix Solar South Africa country manager, Farid Mocer.

The Sonnedix Mulilo Prieska solar project, which comprises an investment of R1,3bn, is almost 50% complete. It has already impacted positively on the economy of the region, creating over 500 direct jobs within the local community and many more indirect jobs, effectively injecting much-needed revenue into local business.

## **Influx of visitors**

Besides employing a large contingent of local labour, many of the suppliers are local, and the project has sparked an influx of visitors to the area, all requiring accommodation and services, which participate in supporting the local economy.



Mulilo Sonnedix Prieska 86MWc plant 50% completed.

"It's a significant boost to the local economy. Sonnedix and its project partners are also transferring valuable skills to the locals. We look forward to developing several more solar projects in the region to realise its full potential," says Mocer.

The project is due for completion in July 2016, when it will connect to the Eskom grid supplying enough power for 20,000 homes.