

Old Mutual Insure's CSI spend hits R8m

In a year marked by political unrest and ongoing Covid-19 disruption, Old Mutual Insure put back R8m in 2021 into communities, bringing relief to many.



Antonia Oakes, executive of responsible business at Old Mutual Insure. | Source: Supplied.

A wide range of communities benefited from the R8m that Old Mutual Insure invested in initiatives, including restocking ten township spaza shops in KwaZulu-Natal affected by the looting in July 201, delivering 500 food parcels and 90 blankets to people in need and enabling farmers in the Free State to fight fires using specialised fire blowers.

Old Mutual Insure also has a long-standing relationship with Gift of the Givers to assist when disaster strikes. The insurer provided food and shelter to those impacted by the floods in George in December 2021, and donated animal feed to farmers in the North West affected by wildfires during the year.

Antonia Oakes, executive of responsible business at Old Mutual Insure, commented: “We feel passionately about uplifting socio-economic conditions in South Africa despite the hunger and poverty exacerbated by the pandemic so that the communities where our staff and customers work really feel a difference to their everyday lives.”

Additionally, Old Mutual Insure partnered with Reach for a Dream to help children with life threatening illnesses. “Specifically, our support is enabling a Dream Room to be built for kids in Lambano Sanctuary, Edenvale, in 2022, which will be a safe, uplifting and inspiring space, promoting healing for ill children,” Oakes added.



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Empowering young people and uplifting schools

A particular focal area for Old Mutual Insure now and last year is youth and education.

In collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund, the company sponsored 135 portable school desks in 2021, which is part of the MiDesk Global initiative, providing underprivileged children who don’t have desks with the ability to attend schools with portable desks. The desk and chair can be wheeled to and from school, has a solar light and USB charging portal to provide light after hours.

Looking ahead, Oakes says that initiatives in 2022 will continue to focus on empowering young people and uplifting schools. “Our Empowering Girl Programme has selected 20 Grade 11 girls with the aim of creating a pipeline of female talent for the insurance industry,” she says.

The Old Mutual Insure Empowering Girls Programme launched on 17 February 2022 and will see the company offering school girls appropriate opportunities to support their professional and personal advancement through relevant life skills, ICT literacy, mentorship and job shadowing programs.



Empowering the youth through access to digital and entrepreneurial skills

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The multi-year programme will not only see the girls immersed in the non-life insurance industry and getting exposed to various careers but will also have the additional benefit of identifying talented girls from underprivileged areas to be the future face of the insurance industry.

In addition, Old Mutual Insure wants to assist a number of schools that don’t have access to water by digging boreholes. “Water is essential in schools both in terms of hygiene and for the sustainability of school gardens that serve many pupils and their families. It is also a scarce resource in provinces that have suffered from debilitating drought in the last few years,” Oakes concludes.