

MEDIA RELEASE FOR DISTRIBUTION ON 30 OCTOBER 2020 EMBARGO: FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA USE

ROSEBANK SUNDAY MARKET TO SHOWCASE MES SHELTER CLIENTS HANDMADE PRODUCTS FOR SALE

JOHANNESBURG; 30 November 2020 – The Rosebank Sunday Rooftop Market has graciously offered Mould Empower Serve (MES) Impilo Shelter space to sell products from their COVID-19 knitting project on Sunday, 1 November.

Founded during COVID-19 level-5 lockdown by a group of shelter ladies, the knitting project has evolved to represent an opportunity for personal growth while developing valuable entrepreneurship skills. MES would like to urge the Johannesburg community to come out and support the ladies this Sunday,1 November at the Rosebank Rooftop Market.

The MES Impilo Shelter, located in Jeppestown, was previously a hospice for the homeless. During lockdown level-5, in partnership with the Department of Social Development and the City of Johannesburg, the facility was transformed into an emergency shelter for the inner city homeless. The lockdown period has presented the shelter with ongoing opportunities to empower and reskill clients residing in the shelter.

The MES shelter has offered its clients life skills and empowerment opportunities during the time of COVID-19 lockdown. Many of the clients residing in the shelter are from different circumstances and were forced to be in the shelter during the lockdown. Through different interventions and social work services offered by MES, the time of the hard lockdown forced the clients to do a lot of personal reflection and to reignite their skills and talents that have laid dormant while they were living on the streets.

Through a generous donation of wool, knitting needles and beads from donors, the ladies started knitting, crocheting and beading to pass time during the hard lockdown.

"Our staff at MES realised that the shelter clients had tremendous talents using their own hands. This has then led to various initiatives being developed by the organisation to ensure we use this avenue as a personal development activity that would lead to a sustainable exit strategy for the clients in the shelter," said MES Johannesburg Branch Manager, Nicodemus Setshedi.

MES reached out to its donor base to support the initiative; this led to the organisation hosting a Women's Day event focussed on skills transfer with volunteers from Hillsong Africa Foundation, Embark Foundation, Mosaïek, Parkview Residents Association and Jenny Currie of Baby2mom Egg Donation who came through to impart and teach the clients intricate skills when it comes to knitting, crocheting, beading and even cupcake decoration.



The project has since grown with more donors coming on board to assist. One such donor has been the Anglo American Ambassador for Good programme who donated funding towards the purchase of secondhand sewing machines, more wool and an industrial oven. Through this generous donation, the ladies at MES Impilo Shelter have been able to produce more items which they are now selling in the various markets around the inner city centre.

During the recent outreach activities MES held at the Rosebank Mall to create awareness about World Homeless Day in October, the ladies from the shelter were also there to showcase and sell their beautiful products, including blankets, bags, jewellery, doeks, masks and aprons. Rosebank Mall realised the immense talent and potential of the items and generously offered them a space to sell at the world-famous Rosebank Sunday Rooftop Market this coming Sunday, 01 November.

"I would like to plead with all Johannesburg residents to come through to the Rosebank Sunday Rooftop Market this Sunday to support the Impilo Shelter ladies; by buying items on sale or maybe ordering other bespoke items of your choice directly with them. Through this you will not just be providing someone with an income; you will be restoring dignity and contributing to a person's development and giving them a second chance at a reintegration into society," concludes Setshedi.

HOW CAN THE PUBLIC GET INVOLVED?

MES is appealing to the general public and all organisations for assistance to fully capacitate its shelters with further skills to assist the clients. The public can help in various ways; donation of items, skills transfer opportunities or financial donations. The public can contact MES directly through e-mail on engage@mes.org.za or WhatsApp 066 371 5787.

For financial contributions of any amount, you may deposit your donation to:

ABSA bank account name MES General Account number: 3240140208 on Branch code: 632005 or Swift code: ABSAZAJJ Reference: ShelterSkillsTransfer

END

EDITORS' NOTES:

Media statement issued by Willem Eksteen (MES Board member and CEO of Stone) on behalf of MES.

Please direct all media enquiries and/or media interview requests to:

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MORE INFORMATION ON MES

MES is a Christian social development organisation that has been changing the heart of the city since 1986 and has been actively working towards providing sustainable solutions to pervasive poverty in the inner city of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Kempton Park.



The initial vision for MES was born in 1986 when the Johannesburg East Dutch Reformed Church started with an outreach programme that handed out food parcels to the homeless and unemployed community of Hillbrow. In 1989 the project registered as a Section 21 company (1989/004921/08) with an independent Board of Directors. Currently the organization is a registered Not for Profit Company (1989/004921/08), NPO (023 603), PBO (RG/0012/09/04) and has Section 18 A (tax benefit) status.

MES facilitates professional services to vulnerable individuals, families and communities. The core services are implemented in each branch depending on the need of the community and available resources. An integrated approach is followed ensuring holistic service delivery contributing to restoration and empowerment where a model of Intake/prevention; intervention and sustainable exit is followed.