

Bell handovers soccer gear to Project Playground

Bell Equipment handed over eighty-nine pairs of various sized soccer boots and seventy soccer shirts to Project Playground towards the end of 2014 to assist the organisation in providing team sports in the Cape Town area.

Project Playground is a global organisation co-founded by Sofia Hellqvist, a former model and fiancée of Prince Carl Philip of Sweden, and her friend Frida Vesterberg, who gave up a modelling career to start and manage the project in the Langa community of Cape Town.

The organisation exists to help children and youth at risk on a local level by providing meaningful spare time and a safe environment where children can merely be children so that they can grow into secure, capable and well-functioning individuals on their own terms.

Apart from organising frequent excursions for the children, Project Playground also holds weekly support groups and monthly meetings to engage with parents

and carers. They also work closely with the police and Social Welfare Department to provide a stronger support system for children.

By achieving on a local level, Project Playground aims to facilitate sustainable change globally by developing nations of strong and motivated individuals who have a dedication to life and education. This will result in economic and social improvement and reduced drug use, crime rates and diseases.

Bell Equipment's involvement with Project Playground is an example of global networking at play. A Swedish school teacher, Ulla Sjöström, visited Project Playground in Cape Town looking for local sponsors and Anita and Svante Cordestam of Cordestam, Bell Equipment's dealers in Sweden, put her in contact with Bell.

General Manager of Bell Equipment's Cape Region and Namibia, John Collins, explained that the company was keen to sponsor Project Playground to play a role in uplifting the lives of children at risk. "As a proudly South African company we are committed to nation building. With our strong family ethos, we have a heart for children especially as we believe in the importance of grass roots intervention to build long term positive change and effect in the future adults of our nation. Sport was an ideal way for us to become involved because we believe that great things can be achieved through sport. Sport has the ability to teach cooperation, respect for others and to create team spirit as well as coordination and positive social development that builds productive, progressive communities - all important skills that will stand children in good stead as they develop and mature into adults."

Similarly sponsoring soccer gear was a natural fit because Bell has been the main sponsor of the Thanda Royal Zulu Football Club for four years. The Club is based in Richards Bay close to the company's factory, and plays in the National First Division.

Collins thanked the Bell Marketing team for sponsoring the soccer shirts, which are Bell branded replicas of the Thanda Royal Zulu shirts. "I'd also like to thank Jordan Shoes in Cape Town for supporting

us by providing favourable pricing on the Olympic soccer boots we have handed over."

At the handover he added: "It is amazing that in giving to those of us in need, we are brought together - people of different nations, races, genders, religions and backgrounds. All of us are united and focused on the common goal. I hope that this gift will help Project Playground to further continue to achieve in transforming the lives of the youth of Langa and enable this youth to become productive, upstanding and proud South African adults, who in turn, may one day help, support and transform the future youth of Langa."

In thanking Bell for their donation, Project Playground Co-Founder, Frida Vesterberg, said: "In as much as clothes shouldn't define you, they can really help you. Bell is donating more than soccer shirts and boots, they are enabling these boys to go out as team, to be united and have confidence and self esteem. Thank you for helping these boys to look the part."

