



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PPC Barnet's impact felt in local communities in DRC**

*A new technical training centre and a local farming project initiated by PPC Barnet are already boosting employment and community economies in nearby villages surrounding the cement plant. With operations nearing commissioning, the CSI projects are just two of a series being rolled-out – changing the face of the area, and creating new opportunities and futures for residents and their children.*

As part of its commitment to empower communities where it has invested, PPC is partnering with stakeholders in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to make a meaningful impact in and around its new PPC Barnet plant. Key to this commitment is ensuring its legacy however, which is why the team worked with the community to understand real challenges that needed to be addressed. "Skills development and employment were two critical issues identified at the outset," explains Kabira Akoob, PPC CSI Manager. "Both were interrelated with the lack of basic skills among the youth contributing to the high unemployment rate."

PPC Barnet has subsequently established a technical training centre in the area: Centre Formation Techniques (CFT). The centre focuses on teaching engineering skills – a prerequisite for entry level technical jobs in most factories. Youth from the villages of Malanga, Zamba, Nkumba and Malanga Gare who have a high school certificate are able to apply to train there. The Centre provides free tuition and lunch and pays a small allowance to assist the students with general upkeep. "Through this initiative, some graduates have secured permanent employment at PPC Barnet, whilst others have started their own businesses in the local town. Others have successfully found employment in manufacturing-related industries," says Akoob.

She notes that while talent pool development is critical, it was equally important for PPC to assist the youth to develop skills that are universal and can be used in any industry, not only in the cement industry. Basic life skills are also taught at the school, equipping the students for future careers.

A similar approach has been taken with PPC Barnet's agri-farming project. "Here our focus is to improve crop production and small-holding farming activities for household consumption and commercial use," explains Akoob. "This has boosted employment and crop success rate, as well as helped us to address malnutrition in the area, specifically in families with younger children."

The starting point for this initiative was to establish a nursery and demo farm where seedlings could be cultivated by the community as they learnt more about farming. Since its inception in June 2015 over US\$200 000 has been invested and the project has germinated over 10 000 seedlings, with approximately 3 000 of these already transplanted. These include Kambala, Lemba and other indigenous trees that have been reintroduced into their natural habitat. The project will be expanded in the future to assist with animal husbandry too.



“PPC takes its role as a community enabler and partner very seriously,” says Akoob. “While we are inspired by the commitment from the community, we’re excited about the impact they’re already making. We thank local stakeholders and community members for allowing us to be part of this journey with them.”

Ends.

### **About PPC Ltd**

A leading supplier of cement and related products in southern Africa, PPC Ltd has nine cement factories in South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Rwanda. In 2016 PPC commissioned its fifth milling depot, located in Harare, Zimbabwe, bringing PPC’s current capacity to around nine million tons of cement products each year. As part of its strategy and long-term vision, PPC is expanding its operations in South Africa, and extending its footprint into the DRC and Ethiopia.

PPC’s Materials business, comprising Safika Cement, Pronto Readymix (including Ulula Ash) and, the recently acquired 3Q Mahuma Concrete, forms part of the company’s channel management strategy for southern Africa. As a result of these acquisitions PPC’s footprint has grown to include 26 readymix batching plants across South Africa and Mozambique and the capacity to produce half a million tons of fly ash.

PPC also produces aggregates with its Mooiplaas aggregates quarry in Gauteng having the largest aggregate production capacity in South Africa. PPC Lime, one of the largest lime producers in the southern hemisphere, produces metallurgical-grade lime, burnt dolomite and limestone.

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