

## **[Mellon Educate \(https://www.activelink.ie/node/519\)](https://www.activelink.ie/node/519)**

Mellon Educate is an Irish-based African development charity founded by developer & philanthropist Niall Mellon. Since 2002 the charity, thanks to the enormous collective effort of some **25,000 volunteers**, has **built houses for 125,000 homeless people** in Africa's poorest townships. This was only possible because ordinary people took selfless action to do something truly extraordinary, lend a helping hand on our annual "building blitz" in South Africa. In 2012, we proudly celebrated a **milestone achievement for the charity with 25,000 houses completed**

In 2013, deep in the Irish recession, the charity redoubled its commitments to those less fortunate in Africa, pledging **10-year education development programme to provide better education to more than 100,000 African children**. A highly ambitious target in co-operation with local community school collaboration, Mellon Educate has already extended educational access and standards of education to 10,000 primary school children aged between 4 and 12 in Kenya & South Africa. In 2014, due to phenomenal demand and a willingness by our dedicated, loyal volunteers, Mellon Educate ran two building blitzes in the same year, one in the same township community where Niall Mellon's township trust first built homes in 2002, another to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela, building not one but two schools in his Eastern Cape homelands on Mthatha, Qunu.

2015 was another landmark year where 260 volunteers put their hands to good work in Masiphumelele, Cape Town, safeguarding the education of 1,650 young boys and girls. Formerly they lived in dilapidated shacks and went to a school that was tumble-down and under-resourced. Now they have a solid roof over their heads and the foundations are set to support education that lasts a life-time.

Every year our volunteers create new inspiring stories of possibility for children deprived of opportunity in their lives. The legacy of the work accomplished in those 7 days, the skilled labour and heavy lifting of long days, is literally a life achievement. Volunteers are the life-blood of our charity and we value each and every one greatly. A 7 day building blitz in South Africa is an arduous undertaking. It's no holiday in the sun! What's more, fundraising to travel and support the construction projects is a colossal challenge before even our volunteers set foot on African soil.

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