

Comrades run for Vuwani

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CIVIL society bodies, education groups and runners have banded together to raise funds for schools in embattled Vuwani in Limpopo province.

More than 52 000 pupils have lost almost three weeks of learning in the region following the torching of 24 schools, with 19 completely destroyed.

The pupils' plight is set to feature prominently at the Comrades Marathon on May 29, with 10 runners so far pledging to raise R1-million for Vuwani schools.

Chartered accountant Grathel Motau, 41, who will be running in her sixth Comrades Marathon this year, is rallying runners to dedicate

People open their hearts — and wallets — to rebuild schools

this year's marathon to raising funds for Vuwani pupils, saying that she was aiming to recruit at least 50 runners to run for the cause.

"I am doing it because I have seen the value of education and the fact that I come from Limpopo.

"The education that I have been privileged to have has changed my life and Vuwani learners are entitled to that education," she said.

According to the National Education Collaboration Trust, Vuwani schools are in urgent need of building material, 6 098 desks and chairs, 26 photocopying machines, 45 printers, 119 cabinets,

50 bookshelves as well as stationery supplies.

The trust, in collaboration with Basic Education For All, the Helen Suzman Foundation and the Kagiso Trust yesterday announced an initiative to "crowd source" donations to meet these needs in order to get Vuwani back to school.

Kagiso Trust donated R1-million within hours of the call, with Rebone furniture group pledging R400 000 worth of school furniture for 1 000 pupils.

Godwin Khosa, head of the National Education Collaboration Trust, pleaded with the public, organisations and corporations to

contribute financially or in kind to facilitate the speedy resumption of teaching and learning at schools in Vuwani.

The Basic Education Department plans to approach the Treasury to

“The education I’ve been privileged to have has changed my life

request R250-million to fix damaged schools in the Limpopo district.

Department spokesman Elijah Mhlanga said the money was needed “as soon as yesterday” after 24 schools were damaged in protests over municipal demarcations.

He said Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan requested the department to submit a proposal for the release of the funds.

“We cannot put pressure on Treasury to say we need the money by a particular date but the urgency of the matter is obvious.

“The temporary structures that have been put in place are not sufficient to accommodate everyone, which will lead to a situation of multigrading,” Mhlanga said.