



The school, rebuilt in a month

photo: Paul Weinberg

They found the school already built!

• Interview with women rebuilding the roads in Mogopa

The women are taking bricks and rubble from the demolished buildings, crushing them and filling the holes in the road with the crushed material. There is a group of about 20 women working in the extreme heat. At midday they stopped to rest under a shady tree.

What are you doing?

We are fixing the roads, because there is nowhere we are going. We are staying here so we are fixing up our place. We want to show this is a place inhabited by human beings.

We the women decided to fix the roads, because we're the people who always walk along them. We want to prance along, not trip and stumble and when we open the new school we want the cars to roll up smoothly.

On that day we are going to have a party and we will invite all the people who slept under the tree with us the night the government was coming to move us by force. We will never forget those people and how they suffered with us.

What if the government comes to smash down this

A huddle of priests at the Mogopa vigil



school?

The government can't come back now, we have suffered enough. We watched while they smashed our old schools. We still respected them enough. But if they try to touch this one. Hey! We will fight. Suffering has made us into equal human beings with them.

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The building of the new school started on January 9 1984. Today, February 9, the school is virtually complete.

It has five classrooms, all beautifully built, and a shining zinc roof. The floors are being thrown at the moment, and all that is left to do is for the window panes and doors to be fitted.

There is a daily buzz of activity at the school. The builders range from tiny boys to very old men, each with his specific task. There are six experienced builders, all local Mogopa people, supervising operations.

No-one is being paid. The community has collected money, and out of this, food is bought and given to all the workers at midday. I spoke to the two men who prepare the food every day.

Old men: We are rushing to finish now. We have been working very fast. The children must get into school. They are hanging around at home now and they are under our feet. Also we cannot go on working for no wages. There is no money at home now not even to buy paraffin. In fact we are fewer now than when we started. Some men have had to go and work for the farmers to earn money for food. It is harvesting time now, though the mealies are dead.

Yes, we have built this school out of suffering. It was very painful to us when our other schools were broken by the government. And now we are suffering because we do not earn money while we build.

But we are also joyful. Because we are not going anywhere, we are happy because Mogopa is our place.

We thank God that we have been able to complete the school in peace.

February 9 1984

Aninka Claassens
Black Sash