

Dis-Chem to pledge R12m following the Springbok Rugby World Cup victory

Dis-Chem CEO Rui Morais was so inspired by the sentiment change in South Africa following the Springbok Rugby World Cup victory, that he penned a letter to Springbok captain Siya Kolisi and his team.



Dis-Chem CEO Rui Morais. Images supplied

The letter celebrated the significant shift in momentum brought about by the Springbok's momentous fourth RWC win, and then went on to pledge R12m – R1m for every point scored in the final match - to be directed towards tackling South African challenges.

Dis-Chem, as a national brand committed to do national good, will commit to funding one sustainable and measurable project per month at R1m over 12 months. Each project, which will be identified with input from Dis-Chem staff, will address relevant concerns. Dis-Chem has confirmed that this corporate pledge is separate from the support given to vulnerable causes by the Dis-Chem Foundation.

The letter reads...

To Siya, the team, and everyone involved in our incredible Rugby World Cup win!

Momentum is a powerful force – both in a positive and negative way.

To add to momentum is incredibly easy – it snowballs, but to change its direction can prove unbelievably difficult!

I am an incredibly proud South African, and have a strong belief that, as before, each of the challenges that face our country, and its people will ultimately be navigated into the past. There is a stubborn resilience to South Africans – which no one embodied better than yourselves starting with your wins in the knock-out stages and ultimately with the final triumph on Saturday evening.

I generally get my own perspective on South Africa's directional momentum and the morale of the country and its people from my morning runs. Arguably, it is a very small sample, but it is often a true reflection of how South Africans are feeling.

Every morning – as I do a customary run to help my clarity of thought – I greet whomever I see along the way. I feel an obligation to share a greeting with a fellow South African – regardless of their purpose, their reason to be on the road or their general daily mood.

Recently, the extent of the reciprocal greetings – the hello or good mornings back – have been less forthcoming. To me, it signals the directional momentum that our country is experiencing with the many challenges we all face.

This Sunday, during my daily run, it was different – you guys created, in my very simple assessment of South Africa's directional momentum, a positive and sizeable shift in our nation's energy and sentiment.

I ran past 15 people on my run that morning – every single person greeted me – in some instances before I could greet them!

The realisation of this momentum shift struck me as I ran past a homeless man who I run past on many occasions. There is never a greeting, and I personally cannot blame him: his circumstances and his difficulties are not known to me, and I can only imagine how challenging it is day-to-day for him.

On Sunday morning, when I greeted him, he looked up and greeted me back - his usual uncompromising, scared, hopeless look changed to a friendly smile. Truthfully, I have no idea if the win had anything to do with his reaction but what struck me was the importance of changing South Africa's momentum. The momentum yourself and your entire team created.

As I thought about this more and more – as I thought about each of the 15 people who had greeted me and encouraged me to think positively, I realised the impression that your momentum-shifting victory had on our nation. It wasn't only about uniting us – it was simply one event that brought out a better version of each of those individuals including myself that lead to shifting our personal momentum and the positive impact that then transpires.

It inspired me, through our Group, to think of ways to invest in the start of this momentum change, to take that moment of good and ensure that we deliver on the responsibility to continue that.

The 12 winning points signal the momentum change and as Dis-Chem, SA's other green brand, we want to invest R1m per point, over 12 months into projects that tackle the core of South Africa's challenges.

It's our contribution to investing into our country, not in an isolated once off manner, but into a focussed sustainable way that truly speaks to a directional change in momentum. One that takes your win and our country's victory as the catalyst for the realisation of hope and the betterment of our wonderful nation.

We have no doubt, given the chance, that every South African would want to bottle the feeling from Saturday night's win and the unity that it inspires, and hold on to it for as long as possible. Perhaps this is one small way we can prolong the 'gees' for a little bit longer.

We thank you for creating the platform, through your victory, to inspire us to add to changing South Africa's momentum!

#Abettertomorrowstartshere

What's more, following President Ramaphosa's announcement that 15 December has been proclaimed a public holiday in recognition of the Springbok victory, Dis-Chem has declared that it should be called National Heroes Day to celebrate all those who make our nation great.

"As a South African company, Dis-Chem is determined to also be a National Hero who makes our country proud. We've been inspired to translate the 12-point Rugby World Cup final score into 12 months of tackling South African challenges with a R12 million investment which will translate into a meaningful, measurable difference to 12 deserving causes," says Morais.

To ensure that the suitably named National Heroes Day on 15 December is a worthwhile day of tangible social impact, Dis-Chem has committed to kicking off the first of the 12 projects with its staff on that date, with the balance to roll out during 2024.

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