

Running on empty - primary schools battle to get access to clean water

Pupils at the Guata Jonathan Primary School in Polokwane have one hand-pump and one small borehole pump for all water requirements. Their pit latrines are also in a bad state with the existing brick structure dilapidated and in need of renewal.

Guata Jonathan Primary had been identified as a needy school in the Limpopo Province as part of the "Water for Schools" project of the Coca-Cola Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN) to provide clean water and improved sanitation to 100 schools in the country.

RAIN's Water for Schools will bring additional more reliable clean water to the Guata Jonathan Primary school, whilst also providing much improved sanitation facilities in the form of six waterless composting toilets, washing facilities for the school feeding scheme, the refurbishment of two boreholes, putting in storage tanks and a drinking fountain.

The project also includes health and hygiene education of learners at the school as well as the training of caretakers in the upkeep and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities.

This project supports and complements the Department of Education's (DOE) plans to eradicate the water and sanitation backlog in schools by 2014. The schools were chosen in partnership with the DOE.

RAIN is a \$30 million project to provide over two million people with access to clean water over a five year period. Water for Schools is a project of RAIN and The Coca-Cola Company's legacy for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

While the RAIN Water for Schools project began in October 2009, The Coca-Cola Company has been involved in numerous water projects over the years. In Africa, through The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation (TCCAF), it has completed 34 projects in 19 countries between 2005 and 2009.

In South Africa, TCCAF has been implementing water projects since 2005. One such project, the Leak Repair project, was designed to improve the efficiency of the municipal water supply services in former townships and schools while simultaneously improving cost-recovery of the municipality for the provision of basic services.

In October 2009, Coca-Cola launched the Colosa Rural Water Supply project in the Eastern Cape and Tzaneen Rural Water Supply project in Limpopo province through a partnership with the respective District Municipalities, Mvula Trust and USAID and Family Health International. A total of nearly 16,400 people will benefit from the water supply projects.

The Leak Repair project, completed at 4 725 households and in 33 schools, also helped to raise awareness of the importance of saving water and increased knowledge of what constitutes energy wastage. This led to a more than 30% reduction in the total amount of water wasted and up to R34 000 savings per school in water bills.

Said William Asiko, President of the Coca-Cola Africa Foundation: "Coca-Cola's commitment to the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ is all about bringing the celebratory aspect of the tournament to as many South Africans as possible and while we wanted to focus on that, we also wanted to leave a legacy that would bring a more lasting joy.

"Our business relies heavily on water – and we are therefore mindful of our responsibility towards a shared resource," says Asiko,

"We have invested half our Corporate Social I budget on water-related programmes in Africa. RAIN is a \$30 million project over five years with the aim of providing over two million people with access to clean water."

Coca-Cola will also launch healthy watershed and sustainable community water access, sanitation and hygiene programs across Africa and contribute to the sustainability of water resources for communities across Africa.

"Across Africa and around the world, some school children are gaining access to clean drinking water for the first time. Access to water helps children grow up healthy- men and women can start small businesses, crops can flourish and communities can thrive," he says.

While RAIN Water for Schools has started with a pilot of nine schools, it will continue until 2012 during which time, a total of 100 schools will benefit.

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The Coca-Cola Company

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