

When vegetables really count for needy children and the joy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ legacy.

For the last eight years, Copetsheni Primary School in Kabokweni, Nelspruit, has won awards for the best vegetable garden in the village.

The vegetables were important because the school children often went hungry and for the orphaned and vulnerable children, school was the main source of food through the school's feeding scheme.

But over the last year or so, the municipal supply of water became increasingly unreliable to the point where water was only available for an hour or two a week.

The school was supplied with 5 000 litres of water a week via a water tank, but this was not enough for drinking, cooking, cleaning and hand washing - let alone for irrigation purposes. The vegetable garden died as a result.

The school's woes didn't end there – there was no water in the kitchen, the rainwater harvesting tank was dilapidated and the pit latrines were in a bad state of repair.

Copetsheni Primary School was then identified as a needy school in the Mpumalanga area as part of the 'Water for Schools' project of the Coca-Cola Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN) initiative to bring clean water and improved sanitation to 100 schools.-

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 project 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 townships and schools while simultaneously improving cost-recovery of the municipalities 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 the 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.

As beneficiaries of the RAIN Water for Schools, teachers from Copetsheni were able to sit with project managers and draw up a wish list. Work is now under way to provide a borehole, 12 composting waterless toilets and a refurbishment of rainwater tanks.

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 behind 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 Investment (CSI) budget on water-related programmes in Africa. 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, schoolchildren 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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