

MEDIA RELEASE

Masakhane Grassroots Educare Centre opens new building

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CAPTION: Children and teachers at Masakhane Grassroots Educare Centre in Mbekweni, outside Paarl celebrated the official opening of a new Grade R classroom, kitchen and store room today, 25 August 2017. The much-needed extension to the existing buildings, which cost R800 000, was built by Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) in partnership with the Rotary Club of Newlands.

When Masakhane began in 1998 there were only four teachers and 80 children meeting in a very small room. “When I started Masakhane I never could have imagined how much it would grow in 19 years. At one stage, when we moved to a new plot of land, we had no perimeter fence and the children sat under a tree,” remembers Joyce Mokapane, Founder and Principal of Masakhane.

Despite these challenges, Masakhane has gained a reputation over time as one of the best Centres in the area, providing excellent learning opportunities to little ones before they move on to Primary School. The latest extension of a second Grade R classroom has enabled the Centre to expand capacity yet again. There are now 235 children between the age of 18 months and six years, in six different classes. Feeding 235 children each day is no small task. The new kitchen is a blessing to the staff who have sufficient space to prepare rice, mince-meat, pap, samp, beans, soup and bread for the youngsters.

This is the second time CCPB has invested in a building project for Masakhane. In 2010 three classrooms, an administration office and toilets were built by CCPB at a cost of about R1 million. “We are thrilled to continue partnering with Masakhane, which is serving a great need in this community,”

says Priscilla Urquhart, Public Affairs and Communications Manager. “It is wonderful to see how these buildings are being used. There is no doubt that an investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) projects like Masakhane is an investment in our future.”

The Rotary Club of Newlands has been working with this ECD Centre since 2009. Rotarian John Winship says, “As Rotarians one of the rewards is knowing that these enthusiastic children are being nourished, stimulated and socialised providing them with the valuable grounding to give them a great start in Primary School. Joyce and her team are dedicated to the education and development of these fortunate young children.”

At the opening celebration, the children entertained the dignitaries and guests with joyful singing and dancing. Speaking at the event, Mokapane said that she was thrilled with the new extension adding that the growth of the Centre has also helped her to create jobs. “We now have 13 full time staff at Masakhane,” she said. Never one to tire from a new dream, Mokapane is already talking about her next project, which is to open a school for Grade 1 to Grade 4 for children in Mbekweni.

For more information about Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB), visit <http://www.peninsulabeverage.co.za/> or contact 021 936 5500.

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Note to editor: Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) is the local bottler and distributor of the products of the Coca-Cola Company in the Western and Northern Cape. Products and brands include Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Stoney, Appletiser, Powerade, Bonaqua, Glaceau, PowerPlay and Monster amongst others. CCPB has been operational for 77 years, having first opened for business in 1940. Their state of the art bottling facility is based in Parow Industria, with distribution centres in Athlone, Worcester and Koelbly. For more information visit www.peninsulabeverage.co.za.