



MASSMART

Massmart champions primary school feeding



Massmart's corporate social investment goal is to offer the greatest possible positive impact in areas that matter most. At the root of some of South Africa's biggest problems are causes that can be addressed through focused initiatives. One such area is poor nutrition in primary schools and the negative impact it has on learner development. By working with the South African government to augment the existing national feeding programme, Massmart is helping feed tens of millions of learners every year. What's more, a recent contribution of \$1 million (approximately R7.5 million) from Walmart will mean that a minimum of 94 additional kitchens will be installed.

Worrying statistics

South Africa's poor basic literacy and numeracy rates present a great challenge for the country. In its 2011 Annual National Assessment, the South African Department of Basic Education tested six million schoolchildren, representing half of all South African learners, and the results that were released in March 2012 showed that the average performance of Grade Threes

in literacy was a low 35% and in numeracy, 28%.

Improving these results will require, among other things, greater investment in teacher training, teaching materials, classrooms, textbooks, stationery and other necessary materials.

Besides these missing essentials, South African educators also have the challenge of trying to teach

hungry learners. It's common for many schoolchildren to start their day on an empty stomach, making concentrating in class and taking on knowledge extremely difficult.

A hungry child cannot learn

The Department of Education knows that a hungry child cannot learn, so it runs the National School Nutrition Programme to provide South African quintile level one, two

CSI investment in 2011

Massmart has traditionally invested a minimum of one percent of profit after tax (PAT) in corporate social investment initiatives, but in 2011 this amount reached 2% of PAT. Its four operating divisions undertake most of Massmart's CSI work, but all efforts follow the group's central CSI commitment to invest in feeding and invest in the critical area of early childhood development. Improving nutrition and supporting education receives a minimum 85% of divisional CSI spending.

and three learners, representing children from the poorest communities, with the essential nutrition required to learn and develop.

In 2008 Massmart approached the Department of Education to find out how the group could make a meaningful contribution to the feeding programme. Because Massmart's chains distribute food and food-related goods, it made the most sense to focus on primary school feeding.

Since 2008, all of Massmart's operating divisions have been actively involved in feeding, resulting in many ongoing projects. These include Masscash's Econo-Kitchen and Masswarehouse's donations to the African Children's Feeding Scheme and Centurus Feeding Scheme. Massbuild's Vegetables Under Construction project is also helping feed primary school learners by providing equipment and skills so schools can grow their own produce on site. Massbuild has augmented its fresh food growing presence at schools by partnering with the Food Gardens Foundation in an effort to teach people small-scale, low-cost organic food gardening. The ultimate aim is to put tools in the hands of people who can help improve food security in South African communities.

The biggest impact, however, has come from Game's AmaLunchbox campaign. AmaLunchbox provides local schools with kitchens equipped with a gas burner, plumbing facilities, a double bowl sink, cupboards, stainless steel preparation counters, shelving, cooking pots, preparation utensils and pink tumblers and bowls for meal times. Most importantly, the kitchens provide safe, hygienic food preparation for learners on-site. In 2012, a phenomenal 19.6 million balanced meals will be served to schoolchildren, equivalent to 1 000 meals a day. There are currently 100 AmaLunchbox kitchens in use

There are currently 100 AmaLunchbox kitchens in use around South Africa and Game plans to continue growing this project in 2012

around South Africa and Game plans to continue growing this project, adding between 25 to 30 more kitchens before financial year-end in June 2012.

Installing more kitchens in 2012

Previously, Game's AmaLunchbox kitchens were located at schools within a 100km radius of a Game store. This has meant that the schoolchildren who benefit are those who live in predominantly urban areas. This year, the Department of Basic Education is honouring Nelson Mandela's 94th birthday with the launch of a project to benefit 94 schools in South Africa. In response, Walmart has donated \$1 million (+/- R7.5 million) to install 94 kitchens in South African schools by June 2012. As an immediate effect of this investment, more schools across the country, whether located in urban or rural areas and whether located near Massmart stores or not, will benefit from a nutritious hot meal prepared and served at school. For many, this will be the most nutritious meal they eat all day. ■



Massmart publishes recipe books for schools

In 2010, Massmart and other sponsors developed a recipe book for the South African Department of Basic Education's National School Nutrition Programme. The purpose of the book was to help volunteer food handlers – the mothers, fathers and community members who offer their time and skills to prepare and serve meals to learners at schools – prepare attractive and delicious meals using limited material resources under what are sometimes challenging conditions. The recipe book includes weekly menus to suit the culinary and cultural diversity of learners in each of South Africa's provinces. Ingredients are selected to meet the nutritional needs of growing bodies and developing minds, with daily doses of vitamins and minerals to help ensure good health in learners, reduce absenteeism at school and optimise learning ability. Thousands of these recipe books were printed and distributed to primary schools across South Africa.