

Be part of Africa's biggest cleanup

The Shoprite Group is staging Africa's biggest cleanup at which over 6 000 people in nine countries are expected to participate in almost 500 events from 14-18 July to remove waste from communities.

In doing so the Group hopes to launch a movement of active citizens who act for change by cleaning and keeping clean public areas. Plastic waste is putting the environment under considerable pressure with the equivalent of a garbage truck of plastic being dumped into our oceans every minute.

Furthermore South Africa risks running out of landfill space over the next couple of years. Recycling therefore is central to this initiative and cleanup organisers are encouraged to partner with local recyclers or wastepickers to ensure that most of what is collected gets recycled. With this focus the retailer aims to highlight the business opportunities available through the recycling of paper, glass, plastic and other material.

Anybody can join via the website www.actforchange.africa, which the Group developed in partnership with volunteerism organisation Brownie Points. The digital platform enables users to create their own cleanups or join an existing one in their area. It also contains information about the nearest recycler or waste management company.

On the platform cleanup organisers are given guidelines on what their duties are as hosts, how to market their event and what to do on the day and after the cleanup. Participants are to share their experience on social media.

The Shoprite Group is committed to reducing waste in its everyday operations:

- It has a zero waste-to-landfill approach.
- In 2013, it became the first South African retailer to introduce shopping bags made from 100% recycled plastic in its Checkers stores. Today these bags are also available at Shoprite and Usave supermarkets countrywide.
- The Group's Free State division has been organising cleanups of the Bloemfontein CBD each month since March 2018.
- In February 2017 its private label Zip Cola became the first carbonated soft drink sold in polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles of which 25% is produced from post-consumer waste.
- The Zip Cola bottle was named Recycled Product of the Year at the 2018 PETCO Awards, the industry's biggest celebration of recycling and waste management excellence.
- Almost 60% of the packaging used for fruit and vegetables – punnets, trays, bags, pockets and cartons – is widely recyclable in South Africa.

The late, great Nelson Mandela dreamt “of our vast deserts, of our forests, of all our great wildernesses. We must never forget that it is our duty to protect this environment.” The Shoprite Group is further compelled to on a daily basis act for change among the people who make up the communities which it serves.

The retail giant fights hunger by planting community food gardens across South Africa and in Zambia and providing meals to those who need it the most with its mobile soup kitchens.

In a national programme the Group empowers women who run Early Childhood Development Centres and creates economic opportunities for women-owned businesses by, among others, adding them to its supply chain.

Rampant youth unemployment is the focus of the Group's skills development programmes, while its Act For Change card seeks to ease the economic pressure on NPOs by ensuring they get a 5% discount at all stores with 30 days to pay and no interest.

END

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