

Food garden keeps the hunger at bay for hundreds of children

With a heart for vulnerable children in her community, Joyce Morudi started the NOSA early learning and orphans and vulnerable children's centre in Winterveld, northern Gauteng, more than 25 years ago.

To ensure that the vulnerable children at the centre didn't go hungry, Joyce started a food garden in 2012. Now, with the help of Shoprite, the garden is helping to keep around 400 tummies full, every day.

"We started the garden because of having to cook for the more than 80 children at our creche," explains Joyce. We didn't have much money to buy vegetables and ensure healthy meals. But now we grow spinach, beetroot, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes and other crops."

Today the garden's fresh produce is also used in the meals prepared for the facility's 140 aftercare learners and the 160 learners who attend a bridging school at NOSA.

Shoprite came on board as a partner earlier this year and Joyce says the irrigation system that Shoprite installed has made a big difference. "Before we had the irrigation system, we were watering by hand in the blazing sun. But now there is a system with a water tank with pipes and an electric pumping machine."

Additional support from Shoprite includes seedlings, gardening tools and uniforms such as caps and boots for those who work in the garden.

All 15 people who tend to the two NOSA food gardens have benefitted from the hands-on permaculture training offered by Shoprite over a period of 18 months. "I am so happy that Shoprite has come on board," says Joyce. "We are expecting further growth and we'd like to eventually sell more produce to the community in order to generate an income."

The Shoprite Group has a robust programme in place to address the food security challenges faced by so many people across the continent daily. Through its support of 151 community food gardens and 2 538 home-based gardens across the country's 9 provinces, the Group fosters long-term food security and generates livelihood opportunities.

ENDS