

Young entrepreneur launches recycling centre in Thembisa with Shoprite's support

Thabiso Hlongwane (28) launched the first [Packa-Ching](#) pop-up buy-back centre, housed in a revamped shipping container, at the Mall of Thembisa last week.

Supported by Shoprite and Polyco, the Packa-Ching pop-up unit will buy recyclable packaging material (plastic, paper, cans and glass) from residents in Thembisa and the surrounding community. The recyclable material is weighed and residents are paid for the value thereof via a cashless eWallet system in real time.

The innovative programme has created two additional employment opportunities, via [Shoprite's participation in the YES programme](#), for members of Hlongwane's team.

"This partnership will assist us with achieving our main goal of creating employment opportunities for disadvantaged youth and is an opportunity for us to help empower the community by providing them with an additional income from recycling," Hlongwane said.

Shoprite also supports the Packa-Ching mobile buy-back centres (consisting of a truck and trailer) which operate in Buffalo City, Thabazimbi, [Katlehong](#), Mpilenhle, [Gqeberha](#) and Cape Town. To date the Packa-Ching programme has created 27 jobs and has collected and recycled over 3.85 million kilograms of waste, paying over R3 million to local communities.

"We've already seen the positive impact of this programme on various local communities - both for those generating an income from recyclables, and for those employed by it. We're confident that the first pop-up unit at the Mall of Tembisa will further increase our reach and impact by promoting recycling whilst creating income-generating opportunities," comments Sanjeev Raghbir, Sustainability Manager at the Shoprite Group.

Packa-Ching recently won the 'Recycling and Circular Economy' category at this year's [Ecologic Awards](#).

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