

From sanitising wipes to 100% recycled, eco-friendly playground equipment

How an entrepreneur turns recycled sanitising wipes into jungle gyms, benches and other outdoor furniture that can be used again and again to support a circular economy

After becoming the [first retailer to recycle its sanitising wipes](#), Shoprite is now closing the loop and creating a circular economy by donating an eco-friendly jungle gym - made from recycled wipes collected from its supermarkets - to the Qedusizi Day Care Centre in Brakpan.

The jungle gym was manufactured by Hudson Diphofa (33), who operates his business from his home in Katlehong. Having worked in the sustainable manufacturing field for more than 5 years, Diphofa was retrenched because of the Covid-19 pandemic. With struggle came innovation and in 2020 he started [Structural Poly Plastic Furniture & Project](#), which uses recycled material to manufacture outdoor furniture products.

“We’re not only looking to build awareness but also a shift to destroy the idea that waste is garbage – waste is simply raw material that can be used to create a variety of reusable products,” said Diphofa.

“This innovative initiative is a wonderful example of how recycling has the power to breathe new life into old things and help protect our environment. While it significantly reduces waste it facilitates a circular economy by using recycled single-use wipes to create durable and reusable jungle gyms, benches and other outdoor furniture,” explains Sanjeev Raghbir, Sustainability Manager for the Shoprite Group.

“Creating a circular economy does not end with sending products to recyclers. Recyclers are only part of the process. In our case our end goal is to ensure that our used wipes don’t end up in landfill but instead get recycled and manufactured into a bench, jungle gym or pallet that can be used over and over again. If necessary, it can be recycled many times and remoulded into a brand-new product, creating a virtuous circle,” added Annette Devenish, Marketing Director at Sani-touch.

Shoprite is committed to advancing early childhood development by investing in skills training for practitioners as well as nutritious meals and educational resources for children at ECD centres across South Africa. In the last financial year, Shoprite’s support of 103 ECD’s benefitted 5 062 children and 291 837 nutritionally balanced meals were served to children in supported ECD centres.

The Qedusizi Day Care Centre has been supported by Shoprite since 2018, which includes training of their ECD practitioners and providing nutritious meals for the learners. Through its partnerships with ECD centres, the retailer ensures that learners have access to a safe, stimulating learning environment in which they are able to thrive.

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