

Harnessing the power of the public to Add Hope

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At a Primedia Outdoor private seminar earlier this year, Prof John Simpson of the UCT Unilever Institute referred to the KFC Add Hope campaign as an example of an initiative that enables customers to contribute to the greater good. Increasingly, he noted, consumers are looking for ways to make a meaningful difference: KFC's Add Hope asks customers to add a R2 donation to the cost of their meal, thereby supporting a programme providing nutritious meals to hungry children around South Africa.

The consumers who have supported the campaign might sometimes wonder: how big a difference has the Add Hope campaign been making? To mark World Hunger Day, (May 28 2017) Add Hope invited a mixed group of celebrities and associates to discover the answer, both through a virtual reality tour and a more traditional site visit to one of the programme's beneficiaries, Afrika Tikkun in Alexandra. (The virtual reality experience is now also available online, so it's possible for the public to virtually "meet" some of the children and projects assisted by their contributions: just go to Add Hope and Africa.

During the past seven years, Add Hope has raised R387 million – R39 million in 2016 alone – "every cent" of which goes to feeding hungry children. The programme currently feeds more than 120 000 children a day, through partnerships with 137 beneficiaries including child and youth care centres, safe havens and other organisations across South Africa. The work that these organisations are doing is truly remarkable – Afrika Tikkun, for example, is "dedicated to the eradication of poverty by caring for vulnerable children in townships through their cradle-to-career approach." Their programmes address the various needs of township children and youth, right up to their eventual placement in tertiary education or job placements, and they have no shortage of amazing (and heart-breaking) success stories.



Feeding 120 000 children every day is a phenomenal achievement, but there is still a long way to go. According to the Global Nutrition Report, as many as one in five children in South Africa suffer from stunted growth and learning difficulties due to hunger and malnutrition. KFC reports that more than 11 million South Africans “don’t have access to proper nutrition and go to bed hungry every night. Of these, 3.1 million are children... Hunger kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined.”

“The impact of hunger on a child is much more than a grumbling stomach,” says Public Affairs Director, KFC Africa, Thabisa Mkhwanazi. “It impacts how children see themselves, it impacts their self-esteem and what they feel they can accomplish. We need to work together to help children learn, grow and thrive. Every time you Add Hope, and that’s why we call it Add Hope, you actually give a child so much more than food.” ”

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