ONE YEAR OF PARTNERSHIPS, GROWTH & GREEN OPPORTUNITY



VUTWA MINI RECYCLING CENTRE NEWSLETTER

A special edition on the people, partnerships and school-led initiatives helping turn recyclable waste into community opportunity.

01 / ANNIVERSARY STORY

A milestone built on collective effort

One year of progress, collaboration and commitment to a stronger recycling culture.



Mr Vusi Matladi, Director of Vutwa Waste Services, addresses attendees at the anniversary celebration.

As **Vutwa Waste Services celebrates the first anniversary of its Mini Recycling Centre**, Director Mr Vusi Matladi acknowledges the valuable contributions of government departments, environmental organisations, sponsors, and private-sector partners who have supported Vutwa's journey.

This milestone reflects the importance of collaboration with the **Gauteng Department of Environment**, the **Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)**, and **Ekurhuleni** Waste Minimisation in advancing environmental awareness, recycling, and community development.

Vutwa also extends its sincere appreciation to its valued sponsors and partners, **EnviroServ**, **petco**, **MetPac SA**, and **Oxfam**, for their contributions towards strengthening environmental education and promoting a culture of recycling among learners and communities.



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01 / ANNIVERSARY STORY CONTINUED

The partnerships powering local recovery

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Collaboration across the recycling value chain, from community partnerships to school participation.

A special acknowledgement goes to **Greener Pastures Recycling Company (Pty) Ltd** for providing Vutwa with valuable opportunities and establishing a working partnership that supports the collection of recyclable materials from Etwatwa Crossing Mall and Tonk Meter Crossing in KwaThema.

This partnership demonstrates how collaboration between community-based organisations and recycling businesses can create practical opportunities, strengthen recycling operations, and contribute to the development of the township green economy.

Through these partnerships, Vutwa continues to advance its vision of empowering Eco Guides, encouraging schools to collect recyclables, reducing waste in communities, and demonstrating that waste can become a valuable economic resource.

As we celebrate this first anniversary, we recognise that our achievements are built on collective effort, trust, and a shared commitment to environmental sustainability.

Thank you to every stakeholder, sponsor, partner, school, learner, and community member who forms part of the Vutwa journey. Together, we are building a greener future and turning waste into opportunity.

02 / WELCOME AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Words of welcome and encouragement

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A speaker addresses community members, school learners and recycling partners at the anniversary programme.

Cllr Mathole Wamathole Thamanga warmly welcomes everyone attending the **Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre's One-Year Anniversary Celebration**.

In his address, he acknowledges the presence and support of all stakeholders, environmental partners, educators, learners, and community members who have joined Vutwa Waste Services in celebrating this important milestone.

His words of encouragement recognise the importance of community participation, environmental education, and collective efforts in building a sustainable recycling culture. He encourages everyone to continue supporting recycling initiatives that empower learners, create green economy opportunities, and contribute to cleaner communities.

As Vutwa celebrates one year of turning recyclable waste into valuable resources, the message remains clear: through partnership, commitment, and community action, we can build a greener and more sustainable future.

03 / SCHOOL RECYCLING

Educating learners through recycling

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Ms Zinhle Vilakazi from **MetPac SA's Trash 4 Treats initiative** explains the importance of the Can/Tin Collection Competition for school learners, highlighting how this initiative promotes environmental responsibility, recycling, and active participation in protecting our environment.

Through this competition, learners are encouraged to collect cans and tins, reduce litter in their communities, and understand that recyclable materials are valuable resources rather than rubbish.

The initiative promotes environmental awareness and responsible waste management; recycling and litter reduction in schools and communities; teamwork, participation, and healthy competition; and awareness of opportunities within the recycling industry and green economy.

At **Vutwa Waste Services**, we believe that educating learners about recycling today helps build cleaner, greener, and more environmentally responsible communities tomorrow.

Together with our partners, we are nurturing a new generation of environmental champions who understand that waste can become an opportunity for positive change.



MetPac SA's Trash 4 Treats initiative supports environmental learning and the Can/Tin Collection Competition.

DON'T THINK WASTE — THINK OPPORTUNITY!

Vutwa Waste Services · Empowering learners. Building a recycling culture. Creating a greener future.

04 / YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

Young Eco Guides leading the way

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Learners from Thembelihle and Sazakhele primary schools take part in the Eco Guide programme.

Learners from **Thembelihle Primary School** and **Sazakhele Primary School**, through their **Eco Guide programme**, showcase the importance of recycling and protecting our environment.

These young environmental champions demonstrate how learners can make a positive difference by promoting waste separation, collecting recyclable materials, reducing litter, and encouraging their schools and communities to adopt responsible environmental practices.

Their participation highlights the importance of environmental education from an early age and shows that young people can play a meaningful role in building a cleaner, greener future.

Through initiatives such as the **Can/Tin Collection Competition**, supported by Vutwa Waste Services and its partners, learners are discovering that recycling is not only about keeping our environment clean but also about creating opportunities within the green economy.

TODAY’S ECO GUIDES, TOMORROW’S ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS!

05 / ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

A celebration of people and partnership

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Representatives of schools and Vutwa Waste Services gathered for the anniversary cake-cutting ceremony.

A special moment as we prepare for the cake-cutting ceremony celebrating **one year of the Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre!**

From left to right: **Ma'am Sindiswa Mathibela** – Eco Guide Coordinator, Thembelihle Primary School; **Mr Vusi Matladi** – Director, Vutwa Waste Services; **Ma'am Tshepisho Sepudumo** – Coordinator, Thembelihle Primary School; **Ma'am Ngema** – Coordinator, Phumulani Primary School, Tsakane; and **Ma'am Molopyane** – Coordinator, Sazakhele Primary School.

Their presence reflects the importance of partnerships between community-based environmental organisations and schools in promoting environmental awareness, recycling and sustainable practices among learners.

As we celebrate this milestone, we remain committed to empowering young environmental champions, strengthening school recycling programmes and building a greener, more sustainable future.

06 / PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

Resilience, patience and passion

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Mpogeng Nkgadima / National Community Relations Manager, EnviroServ Waste Management



A partner representative contributes to the anniversary programme.

Throughout this morning, we have heard a great deal from our colleagues, our corporate partners and other stakeholders about the work they are doing to recycle materials and protect our environment.

This reminds us that the journey towards zero waste to landfill is a collective responsibility. It requires commitment, collaboration and a willingness to do things differently.

When we look at the journey of Vutwa Waste Services and the Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre, we must recognise that it has not always been easy. Building something meaningful in our communities requires patience, resilience and passion. These are the qualities that have brought us to this important milestone today.

Resilience means continuing even when the journey becomes difficult. It means believing in your vision, even when the results are not immediately visible. And it means understanding that meaningful change takes time.

What makes this journey special is that its benefits can reach everyone. From a learner in a school to a grandparent in our community, everyone has a role to play in recycling, protecting the environment and creating opportunities.

06 / PARTNER PERSPECTIVE CONTINUED

From waste management to opportunity

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Learners and stakeholders listen to messages on environmental responsibility and green opportunity.

We are not simply talking about waste management. We are talking about education, entrepreneurship, economic participation and a better future for our communities.

To our learners, I want to say this: you are not only the leaders of tomorrow; you can also be environmental champions today. Among you, we may have future presidents, future CEOs, scientists, environmentalists and successful entrepreneurs. The actions you take today can help shape the future we all want to see.

Let us therefore continue working together towards a future where less waste goes to landfill, more materials are recovered and more people benefit from the opportunities created by the green economy.

Vutwa’s journey reminds us that with resilience, patience and passion, a vision can become a reality.

Thank you.

07 / COLLECTION LOGISTICS

petco strengthens its support for Vutwa Waste Services

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As **Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre** celebrates its first anniversary, we recognise the valuable support and partnership of **petco**, represented by M**s Tlou Sebola** and **Mr Kamogelo Hamisi**.

During the celebration, they explained petco's support for Vutwa Waste Services and highlighted the importance of strengthening recycling initiatives, particularly those that involve schools and young environmental champions.

A major highlight is petco's offer of a 4-metre recycling trailer to Vutwa Waste Services!

This valuable contribution will help ease the collection of recyclable materials from participating schools, improve collection logistics, and strengthen Vutwa's capacity to support school recycling programmes. It represents an important step towards building a more effective and sustainable school recycling system.



A PETCO representative addresses attendees during the first-anniversary celebrations.

4-METRE RECYCLING TRAILER

A partnership commitment intended to help school collections and recycling logistics.

07 / INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

Partnerships create possibilities

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Representatives connect at the programme as collaboration continues across the recycling sector.

We also extend special appreciation to **Ms Tlou Sebola**, who served as the Programme Director for the day, guiding the anniversary proceedings and helping ensure the celebration recognised the achievements of Vutwa and the contributions of its partners.

Vutwa Waste Services is grateful to petco for its continued support and commitment to advancing recycling, environmental education, and green economy opportunities.

Partnerships create possibilities. Support empowers communities. Recycling builds a greener future.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: How can businesses and recycling industry partners do more to support recycling in our schools? Share your thoughts in the comments and tag an organisation that could help make a difference.

DON’T THINK WASTE — THINK OPPORTUNITY!

08 / SUPPORT FOR RECYCLERS

Partnership in action: Community Recycling

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Industry representatives and attendees engage around collection, recycling and local recovery initiatives.

Elizabeth Nkewana, Polyco Programme Coordinator: **Packa-Ching & Waste Picker,** explains how Polyco supports recycling facilities such as Vutwa Waste Services and contributes to strengthening community-based recycling initiatives.

Her contribution highlights the importance of partnerships in developing recycling infrastructure, supporting waste recovery, promoting environmental education and creating opportunities for communities to participate in the circular economy.

Through collaboration between recycling industry partners, community organisations and schools, facilities such as the Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre can help transform recyclable waste into valuable resources while inspiring the next generation of environmental champions.

As Vutwa Waste Services celebrates the first anniversary of its Mini Recycling Centre, we recognise the importance of partnerships that turn environmental commitment into practical action.

Together, we can build cleaner communities, strengthen recycling initiatives and unlock opportunities within the green economy.

09 / GREENER PASTURES

From waste collection to green enterprise

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Thabiso Hlongwane / Founder and Director, Greener Pastures Recycling

2016
First vehicle

2017
Alex Mall / eight employees

2020
Mall of Tembisa / 11 more employees

Ladies and gentlemen,

My journey in the waste management industry began around 2016–2017. In 2016, I managed to purchase my first vehicle. That was an important turning point because it allowed me to go out into the community, collect waste from bins, and learn more about how waste management works in practice.

In 2017, I developed a proposal to provide waste management services at Alex Mall. That opportunity allowed me to start operating at the mall with eight employees.
In 2020, we expanded our operations to Mall of Tembisa, creating opportunities for approximately 11 additional employees.

Today, we manage waste at 22 malls and employ approximately 92 people. When I reflect on where we started, I realise how much can be achieved through determination, hard work and a willingness to recognise opportunities where others may see only waste.

Our partnership with Vutwa waste recycling also began through our work at Etwatwa Crossing Mall, where recyclable materials are collected for recycling. This relationship has been positive, and we appreciate the cooperation that has developed.

09 / GREENER PASTURES CONTINUED

There is money in recycling.

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However, one of the most important values at the heart of our business is helping people understand that there is money in recycling.

We want our clients to understand the value of recyclable materials, and we want our communities to recognise that waste can become an economic resource.

Organisations such as **Polyco, petco and IWASA** have played an important supporting role in the recycling industry. They help connect businesses and community initiatives with resources, knowledge and opportunities, including access to better markets and more competitive prices for recyclable materials.

Through this kind of support, we have access to initiatives such as Polyco’s mobile buy-back centre, as well as static buy-back facilities housed in containers. These facilities provide opportunities for communities to sell recyclable materials and participate directly in the recycling economy.

For me, the biggest achievement is not simply collecting waste. It is changing people’s understanding of waste. When communities realise that recyclable materials have value, they can begin to participate in a system that benefits both the environment and the local economy.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my team. The people working alongside me are the real stars of Greener Pastures. I may be standing here speaking on behalf of the business, but the work they do every day is what makes our achievements possible.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our journey and continues to believe in the value of recycling. Thank you very much.

10 / METPAC SA SUPPORT

METPAC SA SUPPORTS LOCAL WASTE PICKERS

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♻️ METPAC SA SUPPORTS LOCAL WASTE PICKERS DURING VUTWA'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY

During the celebration of Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre's first anniversary, **Ms Belinda Booker from MetPac SA** donated **personal protective equipment (PPE)** to local waste pickers working with Vutwa.

The **donation** included gloves, hats and reflective vests, helping promote the safety, visibility and well-being of waste pickers as they continue contributing to recycling and environmental protection in the community.

Vutwa Waste Services appreciates **MetPac SA's** continued contribution to strengthening community-based recycling initiatives and recognising the important role played by local waste pickers in the recycling value chain.

This gesture reflects the importance of partnerships between recycling industry stakeholders and community organisations in advancing the green economy and creating sustainable opportunities at grassroots level.

Thank you, Ms Belinda Booker and MetPac SA, for supporting our local waste pickers and celebrating this important milestone with Vutwa.

DON'T THINK WASTE — THINK OPPORTUNITY!

11 / COMMUNITIES AND WASTE PICKERS

One community. One shared vision.

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Residents, waste pickers, beneficiaries and learners were among the participants in the anniversary programme.

Members of the community, local waste pickers and beneficiaries of the **Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)** came out in numbers to join **Vutwa Waste Services** in celebrating the first anniversary of the **Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre**.

Their presence demonstrated the importance of community participation in promoting recycling, environmental awareness and sustainable waste management.

The celebration also recognised the important role played by waste pickers in recovering valuable recyclable materials, reducing waste sent to landfill and contributing to the circular economy.

By bringing together community members, waste pickers, government representatives, schools and recycling industry partners, Vutwa continues to champion a shared vision of cleaner communities and greater opportunities through recycling.

11 / REFLECTING ON A YEAR OF IMPACT

A year of impact, partnerships and green opportunities

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The Vutwa team at the first-anniversary celebration.

Vutwa Waste Services proudly celebrates a year of progress, collaboration, and commitment to building a sustainable recycling culture!

Our executives and communications team were present to capture this important milestone, engaging with government departments, environmental stakeholders, sponsors, and community partners through interviews and conversations that highlight the power of working together for a greener future.

steps

From empowering learners through Eco Guide initiatives to strengthening recycling partnerships and creating opportunities within the green economy, Vutwa continues to demonstrate that waste is not just rubbish it is a valuable resource.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to every stakeholder, sponsor, school, learner, and community member who has contributed to this journey.

TURNING WASTE INTO OPPORTUNITY, ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

A greener future is a shared effort.



Celebrating one year of the Vutwa Mini Recycling Centre.

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Empowering learners. Building a recycling culture. Creating a greener future.

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