

Africa Food for Thought - Christmas in the park

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Christmas came early on the West Rand last Saturday 28 November 2009 at 10h00 when Africa Food for Thought (AFFT) hosted a Christmas party for its orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). 108 children joined AFFT and its sponsors for a Christmas party at the Nestle Centre at the Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens. This venue was kindly sponsored by Afrox, one of our faithful partners, with Wesbank donating the use of a kombi (and driver!) to help us transport some of the children as well as sponsoring two popcorn machines.

These very disadvantaged kids had a ball with a layout of sweets, biscuits, drinks and other goodies that made it a very special day. Face-painting, football and bead necklace-making kept the kids, aged from six to sixteen, happy and occupied for some five hours, with two Father Christmases, presents and stockings adding to the joy. A team from Rand Merchant Bank made up 120 highly prized sweet packs with tennis balls in brightly coloured stockings. Individuals and churches donated money to help buy a gift for each child with KTV and Rotary International also coming to the party with gifts and a jolly Christmas tree. KBC donated all the refreshments for the day, whilst Gladiator Inflatables lent us two highly popular jumping castles. Miscellaneous goodies and free ice came from Kamoso Convenience Centre whilst National Emergency Medical services (NEMS) were on call to deal with over-excited children. AFFT volunteers as well as Japsnoetjie donated refreshments for the volunteers. KFC made up with great verve 120 free Chicky meals that gave the kids a very popular and highly acclaimed treat. TNS Research Surveys, AFFT's longest serving sponsor, contributed much needed cash resources, largely via money raised by staff in the annual mid-year quiz night derby, that made sure that the party was highly memorable for all who took part - kids and volunteer helpers! It was a tired but happy bunch of kids (and adults!) who wound their way home after a day of perfect weather.





About Africa Food for Thought (AFFT)

Africa Food for Thought is a non-profit organization, run by volunteers, and is focused on equipping and supplementing school feeding programmes. We currently support eleven school feeding projects, one community project and seven crèches. In total we feed approximately ten thousand children. Whilst we equip and supply the projects, it is the parents and community volunteers who run the project, do the cooking and serving. In this way, we encourage schools and communities to own the project. We believe in empowering people and communities rather than creating a spirit of dependency.

Whilst all the children come from disadvantaged and impoverished backgrounds, some of the children are particularly vulnerable: often orphaned by the AIDs epidemic and living in child-headed households. These children are often not receiving any grant or aid from the government, sometimes through ignorance, sometimes through fear of being institutionalized, and sometimes through lack of documentation. AFFT currently supports 53 such households with monthly food parcels. These parcels generally contain the basic staples required for nutritional survival, although we do try to include items for personal hygiene, clothing, bedding and similar items.

AFFT is also involved in a number of community projects, self-help/empowerment projects and shelters and half-way houses. Our aim is to help those who need it the most: the vulnerable and marginalised.

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