

A happy moment for the volunteers of the KwaZulu-Natal Integrated Greening Programme, in Willowfontein and Sobantu, as they reap their rewards for their hard work.



KwaZulu-Natal integrated Greening Programme distributing groceries to the volunteers under this programme. From left Xolani Xulu ; Manager EPWP, Roelie Kloppers ; Director Wildlands Conservation Trust, Abel Njilo ; Crifkor Milling

The KwaZulu-Natal Integrated Greening programme began in on the 1st of April 2011 as a result of KZN Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize vision to keep the environment clean and simultaneously helping the needy. This resulted in the Private Public Partnership programme led by the Office of the Premier involving KZN Public Works, Wildlands Conservation Trust, Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Rural Development, Economic Development and Tourism, Human Settlements, Msunduzi and eThekweni Municipality. The KZN Public Works' role here is that it coordinates the programme in the province, leading other participating departments and the private sector.

This is how the Programme works: Volunteers collect different kinds of recyclable waste materials from around their neighbourhood, this may be in a form of bottles, plastics, paper, cardboards, etc. These items are placed in bags and stored at the storage warehouse situated in the area. Once they have completed the collection, Graeme Farley, the project manager from Wildlands Conservation Trust, will then set a date to weigh all the bags which after the weight size per bag will equal a specific amount of money which serve to benefit the volunteers who are called "waste-preneurs". All participating volunteers are given what is called a 'credit note' which is a piece of paper stating how much is the rand value of the waste that they have collected. They can then choose what they want to purchase with money earned, most volunteers choose groceries but some will request the payment of their children's school fees.



Emily Zondi, a volunteer in the KZN Integrated Greening Programme, receives her reward in the form of groceries

Emily Zondi lives in Willowfontein and takes care of four of her children and three grandchildren. “No one has a job at home” she says. “My family and I have been struggling to make ends meet but now I feel so relieved that with the KZN Integrated programme I can now put food on the table for my children”.



Prizer Sithole, a volunteer in the KZN Integrated Greening Programme, receives her reward in the form of groceries

Prizer Sithole is a pensioner who lives in Sobantu and also takes care of nine of her children and grand children whom are unemployed. “Life was hard before I joined the project, my pension money was not enough for me and my family to survive on. Now I am happy to say that now i do not have to worry that my family will go hungry. The recycling project has made a huge difference in the community because we have a cleaner area”.

The aim of the project is to expand to all 10 KZN district in the next 5 years and nurture the activities of 1783 green-preneurs who will collectively grow and barter 407 000 trees, plant 354000 of these trees and collect and barter 1 205 000 kgs of recycling.