

FROM ZAKUMI TO RUNNING ON TO THE PITCH

May 2010

Over a hundred thousand teenagers entered the Coca-Cola flag-bearing competition - an initiative designed to bring the youth centre stage to carry the national flags of the participating nations in the 2010 FIFA World Cup™. Of those 768 made the grade.

“We are counting down days to the FIFA World Cup™ - South Africa’s first! We at Coca-Cola South Africa wanted to bring the euphoria of this magnificent event to ordinary South Africans, giving them extraordinary experiences.

“In 2009, youth between the ages of 12 and 16 had an opportunity to have their moment in history by becoming flag-bearers and to feel the thrill of the crowd roaring during the Confederations Cup. For the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, this opportunity was yet again extended to the youth,” says Sammy Mohlaoli, Senior Communications Manager at Coca-Cola South Africa.

Coca-Cola South Africa had the opportunity to choose and provide flag crews - made up of 768 teenagers (71% local and 29% international) – to carry the national symbols of the teams on to the pitch prior to the start of each of the 64 games, including the final match at Soccer City, Johannesburg, on 11 July.

The flag-bearing competition commenced at the Zakumi launch in November 2008 where six flag bearers were selected. A number of slots were allocated to various organisations, such as the 24 going to two charity organisations based in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. The final 330 were recruited via SABC radio.

The selected youth were allocated to the various stadiums and provided with training prior to their appearances at the World Cup matches. The local winners will be working alongside 222 youth from 22 other countries that will be carrying their own national flags. These children will be flown in by Coca-Cola for a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Coca-Cola’s involvement with the World Cup stretches over more than 70 years and since 1978 it has been one of the official sponsors of the FIFA World Cup™.

In South Africa Coca-Cola is involved in a number of projects to promote the development of youth soccer at grass-roots level.

Through the FIFA Ticket Fund initiative Coca-Cola also provided 20 000 young children with opportunities to watch World Cup matches. Tickets were allocated to schools across the country that participated and excelled in recycling projects.

The Coca-Cola Trophy Tour took the world's most coveted sporting prize on a trip around the world over a period of 225 days. The solid-gold FIFA World Cup Trophy took the pride of place at the Final Draw in Cape Town on 4 December 2009 and will be going on a month-long trip around the country starting on May 7.

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For further media information, please contact:

For media enquiries:

Sammy Mohlaoli

Senior Communications Manager Coca-Cola South Africa

Tel: +27 11 644 0528

Fax: +27 11 644 0766

Mobile: +27 79 525 6934

E-mail: smohlaoli@afrc.co.com

The Coca-Cola Company

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