

# Case study: Environment

## **Rural school adopts a world-first innovation in environmental sustainability**

Few may know that Lady Frere's Three Crowns junior primary school is the first educational institution in the world to use the sustainability commons project. This innovative project is a joint initiative of the Eskom Energy and Sustainability programme and the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA).

Beginning in November 2010, the school has taken the school greening project and run with it, establishing and displaying a replicable nucleus for learning through active learning and social interaction.

The project consists of a hybrid wind energy system, a solar cooker, a biogas system and water treatment works. This region was perfectly suited to the project as rural Lady Frere needed a number of interventions and alternative solutions in addressing issues such as electricity supply, sanitation and food security.

The Lady Frere district office department of education has used the commons as a platform for all schools in the district to be able to visit the school and the community in order to learn about energy efficiency and replicate the project. In the Eskom eta awards young designers' category, the school was a winner for their innovative approach to energy efficiency. In addition, five children at the school were chosen in 2010 to attend a sustainable energy conference in Sweden in 2010. According to life sciences teacher, Ntombosindiso Mnyaluza, the children were the only ones who represented an African country and emerged in fourth place.

Says Mnyaluza: "It has really changed our lives for the better because we have children who think much broader now."

CEO of the Eskom Development Foundation, Haylene Liberty-Nel says: "The Eskom/WESSA energy and sustainability programme has grown substantially and now boasts over 150 projects nationwide. It has proven itself by receiving numerous national and international accolades."