



## Zimiseleni Primary School: Digwale B, South Africa

[www.PlayPumps.org](http://www.PlayPumps.org)

Carving a long and steady scar from the country's capital through the rural lands of Mpumalanga province is the notorious Moloto Road. For thousands of people that live in the scattered villages along its length, the road is a lifeline that connects them to the opportunity of a job in Tshwane – formerly known as Pretoria.

With unemployment as high as 65% in some parts of this region, the three hour commute by bus is a sacrifice readily made for those lucky enough to have found work. For the rest of the communities that stretch from Moloto to Marble Hall, agriculture might have been an alternative income stream - were it not for water being even scarcer than jobs.

In the village of Digwale B, over a hundred miles northeast of Tshwane, the community struggles constantly to collect enough water to keep up with even their most basic needs. A weak and ageing pipeline threads its way through a number of neighbouring villages providing water to just one village at a time. "The

people have become accustomed to having no water for at least two or three days each week," explains Daniel Mathabe. "When this happens, we must pay a taxi to take our buckets to be filled at the other village. If the women cannot wait for the taxi to come – then they will walk and carry their 20 litre buckets on their heads." says Mathabe.

Mathabe works at the local primary school called Zimiseleni. In the local Ndebele language it means 'we are ready.' But nothing could have prepared the school for the gift they recently received.

Netcare – a leading South African medical services organisation that manages accident, emergency and trauma units around the country funded the cost of the PlayPump® water system for the school. As the children play on the merry go round, water is pumped from a borehole that has been specially tested to ensure that it yields clean drinking water for the school.

Since visiting the school, Netcare learned about a home based care programme being run by volunteers and was impressed by the initiative shown by the community.

For the school, the largest challenge remains trying to keep goats and cows away from the new food garden they are planting now that they have a pure and constant supply of water. The school was recently successful in securing some funds from the Department of Education to increase the perimeter fence to include the PlayPump system and the school will manage how the water is shared with the community. "If the kids know they can drink freely at school – without the risk of getting sick – they will attend more regularly and get the education they need." says Daniel.