

## **Konica Minolta SA plants 2000 trees around Polokwane, Kimberley**

Konica Minolta SA has been supporting South Africa's national greening and food gardening social enterprise, Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA), for five years and recently planted 2013 trees at impoverished schools in the Polokwane and Kimberley regions.

The total of trees donated by the company is now 17,678, illustrating its commitment to taking proactive steps against global warming.

According to Konica Minolta South Africa employees Morne Etchell, Polokwane branch manager, and Gerhard Kruger, Kimberley branch manager, FTFA selected nine schools in Polokwane, Limpopo, and 38 around Kimberley in the Northern Cape to receive the indigenous and fruit trees.

"Before the trees were planted, the schoolchildren were educated on the importance of proper ground preparation, planting techniques and aftercare. This will ensure that the trees will flourish and will be enjoyed by generations to come. This complemented the schools' own teachings on nature and sustainability. Now the trees become the responsibility of the school - but, we will still remain involved, with both the schools and the community," said Kruger.

### **Improved academic performance**

"Konica Minolta South Africa employees got thoroughly involved with the planting of the trees along with the schools' staff and children, and found it to be a greatly rewarding experience," said Etchell. "The primary purpose of the trees is to provide shade for the schoolchildren, to sit and play beneath during the hot summer months, but they also beautify the school and its surroundings."

The beautification of schools has been linked to improved academic performance. According to a 2010 study entitled "Student performance and high school landscapes: Examining the links", students perform better academically at schools with more nature around it; they were more likely to graduate and less likely to commit a crime.