

Soccer World Cup campaign to combat African poverty

Global sports brand Puma has joined forces with charity organisation United For Africa to support 5000 aid and humanitarian projects spread across Africa in the run-up to World Cup 2006. Puma sponsors all five African teams to qualify for the tournament in Germany.

"As the leading supplier of many African football teams, Puma has a socially and ethically motivated responsibility to be active on the African continent. We ourselves are no experts in developing and implementing aid and humanitarian projects, so United For Africa, with its necessary experience and expertise, is the perfect partner for assisting in a target-oriented distribution of donations in Africa, helping reduce the continent's pain and suffering," Puma CEO Jochen Zeitz said at a press conference in Berlin, 4 April 2006 which announced the partnership.

The press conference was hosted by Ghanaian footballer and journalist Anthony Baffoe, Puma CEO Jochen Zeitz and United For Africa spokesperson Susanne Anger. Faithless front-man Maxi Jazz and hip-hop artist Akon performed at the launch.

United For Africa works through 30 aid organisations which are involved in a variety of projects including the construction of schools in refugee camps, the provision of small-scale bank loans, the creation of networks to protect children in need, the reintegration into society of former child soldiers and in providing care and educational support for AIDS orphans.

Puma sponsors all five African teams (Angola, Togo, Ivory Coast, Ghana and Tunisia) which have qualified for the World Cup. United For Africa also has links to these countries where it supports a variety of development projects.

"We are extremely happy to have found such a strong and authentic partner as Puma for our campaign. In addition to the work of the aid and humanitarian organisations, United For Africa strongly aims to communicate and emphasise the true potential of the African people," said Anger.

Small donation, huge impact

Many people in the developed world have little or no idea how a relatively small donation can benefit the lives of impoverished people in Africa. United For Africa points out that by donating the equivalent of 10 Euros, one can pay an African child's school fees for a year, including the costs of books and a uniform. 300 Euros is the cost of building and equipping a mobile school in a refugee camp.

In partnership with United For Africa, Puma will raise awareness and generate funds for these projects through the sale of a new limited edition Puma Charity Collection that was launched in Berlin.

The fashionable Puma Charity Collection combines specially developed graphics of German cities and lifestyle graphics related to football, with the national colours of most of the football teams at the World Cup. Puma Concept Stores in Germany will supply special heat presses to enable fans to design their own T-shirts and customise everything down to their flip-flops.

Additional campaign merchandise includes a CD of music by African and Western artists, and a coffee-table

book *The African Game*, produced by Nigerian fashion photographer Andrew Dosunmu and author Knox Robinson, which pays homage to Africa and football.

Berlin's Café Moskau will be Puma's football headquarters during the World Cup and special trams in Berlin will be equipped with interactive material to raise awareness of the United For Africa campaign.

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