

Nine decades of Coca-Cola in Africa

Ninety years ago, in 1928, the first Coca-Cola was sold on the continent in Cape Town, South Africa.



Coca-Cola delivery truck filled with boxes in South Africa. The Belfast warehouse limited building in background. (1940)

On 8 May, the Coca-Cola Company celebrated its global 132nd birthday and 90 years of operation in Africa. Today, with the help of more than 55 bottling partners, the African business has expanded its portfolio of products into nearly all sub-Saharan African countries through its Coca-Cola export business.

Under new global CEO, James Quincey, the business has embarked on a journey to become a Total Beverage Company, expanding its brand portfolio by launching more than 500 products. This "Beverages for Life" vision includes a more nimble, test-and-learn approach to launching new products around the world.

Inclusive development

Over the next 90 years, The Coca-Cola Company says it will accelerate its evolution to innovate its portfolio, packs and channels. "It will be more ambitious and bold in being a partner for inclusive development and seek to help address some of the continent's most pressing problems," the company promises.

These focus areas include female economic empowerment and environmental stewardship, with particular emphasis placed on tackling water scarcity and plastic waste.

Earlier this year, the Coca-Cola Company announced it will collect and recycle the equivalent of 100% of the packaging it sells by 2030.

It is also accelerating its work to be water neutral – returning all of the water used to make its beverages to local communities and the environment by partnering with more than half a dozen aid and development organisations, including the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Development Program and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, to help meet its goals.



Sampling Coke around a neighborhood door-to-door in Brakpan (1952)



Coca-Cola Company pledges to cut plastic packaging waste

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“We have been refreshing our customers’ memories, growing their enterprises and stewarding their environment for 90 years. We will continue to do so, but not just as Coca-Cola. For the next 90 years, we will be refreshing Africa forward as a Total Beverage Company, so we can be part of more occasions and more memories. We will do more to safeguard the environment, provide more jobs and empower more women. We are accelerating our business into one that is a partner in Africa’s prosperity,” says Maserame Mouyeme, public affairs, communications and sustainability director for Coca-Cola Southern & East Africa.

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