

News

'Thatu's Clapham Common Jabula'

5th July 2005

SOUTH AFRICA TIMES

Across the river from Saturday's Hyde Park Live 8 Concert, there was a celebration South African style on Clapham Common. The Jabula on the Common was organised by Thatu, a new charity raising funds to enable some of the poorest communities in South Africa to set up their own community school food gardens.

"Jabula is a South African word meaning to be happy, and our event was certainly that," said Margery Povall, Chair of Thatu. "It was our biggest fundraising event yet and its success has meant that we are now ready to support the setting up of two school community food gardens in some of the poorest areas of South Africa. These will be the first of many community gardens and the home grown nutrition it provides will make an enormous difference to the health of its community."

The Jabula attracted people from all walks of life – from local allotment holders who were able to contract their plots with the food gardens in South Africa to passers by who had their first tastes of Sudanese biscuits, South African melktert and boerewors. There were stands about Fairtrade, organic gardening, traditional arts and crafts, and HIV / Aids, so prevalent in Africa. Talks ranged from gardening of cement and paving stones to ways of developing communities around allotments and vegetable gardens.



Thatu was set up just last year to help poor South African communities grow food through permaculture – an environmentally sensitive way of getting the best from land when water and other resources are scarce.

"Thatu is all about enabling people to help themselves and that struck a chord with our Jabula-goers," continued Margery Povall. "They gained insights of food gardening in South Africa – about the often harsh conditions under which they must nurture plants and ultimately how a better nourished population is in a much better position to be able to withstand the ravages of HIV and Aids. They also especially enjoyed the raffia scarecrows so essential to protect crops!"

Thatu is about to fund two school community gardens in South Africa and fundraising from local Jabulas will be used to sustain these, and start more. Thatu is a registered charity and its work is undertaken entirely by unpaid volunteers.

For more information, see www.thatu.org

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