

Firmly Behind Bafana

By Deborah Spicer

World Cup fever has taken hold of the mining sector, and every Friday Venmyn's staff are clad in their yellow Bafana Bafana regalia in support of the South African team. Venmyn has also noticed the same spirit among other companies in the mining sector.

Last month, Venmyn visited sand and stone producer Buildmax's beading project, which Buildmax has initiated and is funding as part of its social upliftment programme. The women involved in the beading project are hard at work making 100 South African flags, which have been commissioned by Buildmax for its staff for the World Cup.

The women would not even part with one of the flags, which the budding entrepreneurs are saving to fill their order. Buildmax has invested R80,000 on the beading project, including R50,000 in staff training and materials. Five women are involved in the project at the company's Crushco operation and another five at the company's Verlesha operation. "It is heartening to see companies like Buildmax making a real difference and equipping local people with skills," says Venmyn Industrial Mineral Analyst Carol Taylor.

Buildmax has also invested R100,000 on irrigation pipes, training, seeds and staff wages at its on-site vegetable garden at its Verlesha operation. The garden provides employment for five people, and should produce sufficient vegetables to cover costs through sales, and allow the company to buy vegetables from those market gardeners and donate the vegetables to needy institutions and individuals in its community. "These projects may help sustain communities long after the World Cup has ended and mining has stopped," enthuses Taylor.

