

The Chrome Dinner



Chrome Dinner Awards 2026 Nomination

Corporate and Social Responsibility Award

Project Title

Enhancing Education and Water Access at Katawa Primary School

Nominated Organisation

Karo Platinum Mine (in partnership with Masimba Holdings)

Executive Summary

The Katawa Primary School Education and Water Access Project was implemented by Karo Platinum, in partnership with Masimba Holdings, to improve learning conditions and water security for more than 230 learners at Katawa Primary School, located approximately 5 kilometres north-west of the Karo Platinum Mine construction site.

Through a new classroom block with staff offices, a dedicated borehole and a solar-powered pumping system, the project created safer learning spaces, reliable access to clean drinking water and a healthier school environment. Its practical impact, sustainability and contribution to education, health and community well-being make it a strong nomination for the Chrome Dinner Awards Corporate and Social Responsibility Award.

Project Overview

The Katawa Primary School Education and Water Access Project is a corporate social responsibility initiative implemented to improve education infrastructure and water security at Katawa Primary School, a rural school situated approximately 5 kilometres north-west of the Karo Platinum Mine construction site.

The project was delivered by Karo Platinum in partnership with Masimba Holdings and directly supports more than 230 learners, their educators and the surrounding community. It responded to damaged and inadequate classroom facilities, overcrowding and unreliable access to safe drinking water.

Key project components included the construction of a new classroom block with staff offices, drilling of a dedicated borehole and installation of a solar-powered pumping system. Together, these interventions provide safer learning spaces, reliable potable water and a more resilient school environment that will continue benefiting current and future learners.

Background and Need

Katawa Primary School serves learners from the rural communities surrounding the Karo Platinum Mine construction site and is an important access point for basic education in the area. Prior to the intervention, the school was operating under increasingly constrained conditions, with storm-damaged infrastructure, overcrowded learning spaces, repurposed farm sheds offering limited protection from the elements, and unreliable access to safe water affecting daily school operations.

The need for support was clear and urgent, with the school facing several interrelated challenges that affected learner safety, dignity, attendance and educational outcomes:

- Inadequate and unsafe classroom facilities that limited effective teaching and learning.

- Severe overcrowding following storm damage to existing structures, placing additional pressure on already limited learning spaces.
- Unreliable access to safe drinking water, affecting learner well-being, hygiene and normal school operations.
- Exposure of learners and educators to weather-related disruptions due to compromised infrastructure.
- Increased health and sanitation risks linked to poor water security and limited supporting infrastructure.

Without timely intervention, these constraints would have continued to undermine learner attendance, classroom effectiveness, health outcomes and the broader well-being of the school community. The project therefore addressed an essential development need by strengthening both education infrastructure and water resilience in a practical, sustainable manner.

Project Implementation

Karo Platinum and Masimba Holdings delivered an integrated infrastructure development programme with two complementary components aimed at improving access to essential services and strengthening education outcomes within the community.

The first component, implemented and funded solely by Karo Platinum, was the development of a water supply system at a cost of US\$12,880. The project was successfully completed and handed over in March 2025, providing the community with improved access to safe and reliable water.

The second component was the construction and furnishing of a classroom block, delivered through a partnership between Karo Platinum and Masimba Holdings at a total cost of US\$83,000. The facility consists of two classrooms, each with a capacity to accommodate 40 pupils, as well as two offices for administrative use. It was handed over in September 2025. The project has significantly enhanced the learning environment and increased educational infrastructure capacity for the benefiting community.

Collectively, these investments demonstrate the commitment of Karo Platinum and Masimba Holdings to sustainable community development by supporting both improved water access and quality education. The infrastructure consists of:

Education Infrastructure

- Construction of a new classroom block with staff offices to replace inadequate and damaged facilities.
- Creation of a safer and more conducive learning environment.
- Reduction of classroom overcrowding.
- Improved educational facilities for both learners and teaching staff.

Water Security Infrastructure

- Drilling of a dedicated borehole (to 70m) on the school premises.
- Installation of a solar-powered pumping system.
- Provision of reliable access to clean and safe drinking water through the installation of five water taps around the school and a 5 000-litre water storage tank, ensuring a sustainable and dependable water supply for learners and staff.
- Sustainable, renewable-energy-powered water supply for long-term community benefit.

The project was implemented through collaboration between Karo Platinum, contractor partners, school leadership and community stakeholders to ensure that solutions addressed genuine community needs.

Outcomes and Impact

The project delivered two tangible, high-impact assets — a new classroom block and a solar-powered borehole system — that directly address the school's identified infrastructure constraints.

Education Impact

- The construction of the new classroom block increased the school's capacity by accommodating 80 additional pupils. Prior to the intervention, 103 out of the 230 pupils (45%) did not have access to adequate classroom space. The project significantly reduced classroom shortages, leaving only 23 pupils without dedicated classroom accommodation and providing a more conducive learning environment for the majority of learners.
- Enhanced teaching and learning environments support better educational outcomes.
- Reduced classroom congestion has improved learner engagement and classroom effectiveness.
- Improved infrastructure has created a safer and more dignified learning environment.

Health and Water Impact

- Reliable access to clean drinking water throughout the school day.
- Reduction in the risk of waterborne illnesses.
- Improved hygiene and sanitation conditions.
- Enhanced learner health, attendance and productivity.

Community Impact

- Strengthened collaboration between Karo Platinum, Masimba Holdings, school leadership and community stakeholders.
- Demonstrated meaningful mining-sector investment in essential local development needs.
- Showcased the value of public-private and community partnerships in addressing practical social challenges.
- Delivered durable school assets designed to serve current and future learner cohorts.

Sustainability and Legacy

A key strength of the Katawa Primary School project is its long-term sustainability. The solar-powered borehole system provides an environmentally responsible and cost-effective water solution, reducing dependence on external energy sources while ensuring ongoing water security.

The classroom infrastructure provides a durable educational asset that will continue serving learners for many years. Together, these investments contribute significantly to community resilience, educational development, and improved quality of life.

The project aligns with Karo Platinum's commitment to responsible mining, community development, and the advancement of Sustainable Development Goals relating to Quality Education, Clean Water and Sanitation, Good Health and Well-being, and Sustainable Communities.

Sustainable Development Goals Achieved

The Katawa Primary School Education and Water Access Project contributes directly to several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by improving access to education, clean water, health, sustainable infrastructure and collaborative community development.

- **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being** — Improved access to clean drinking water, reduced exposure to waterborne illnesses, and better hygiene and sanitation conditions support learner health, attendance and productivity.

- **SDG 4: Quality Education** — The construction of a new classroom block has created a safer, more dignified and more conducive learning environment for more than 230 learners.
- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation** — The dedicated borehole and solar-powered pumping system provide reliable access to safe drinking water and strengthen long-term water security for the school community.
- **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy** — The use of solar power for the borehole pumping system demonstrates a practical renewable-energy solution that reduces reliance on conventional energy sources.
- **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** — The project delivered fit-for-purpose education and water infrastructure that improves resilience and supports sustainable community development.
- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** — By investing in essential community infrastructure, the project strengthens local resilience and contributes to safer, more inclusive and more sustainable communities.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals** — The project reflects effective collaboration between Karo Platinum, Masimba Holdings, school leadership and community stakeholders to address real local needs.

Why This Project Deserves Recognition

The Katawa Primary School project demonstrates what can be achieved when industry partners work collaboratively to address fundamental community needs. What began as an urgent response to damaged infrastructure evolved into a transformational initiative that improved education, health, and water security for an entire school community.

By investing in both learning facilities and sustainable water infrastructure, Karo Platinum has created a lasting legacy that extends beyond mining operations and contributes directly to the future success of hundreds of young learners.

This project is a powerful example of corporate social responsibility in action—delivering measurable social impact, promoting community well-being, and creating opportunities for future generations.

Concluding Statement

The Katawa Primary School project is more than an infrastructure intervention; it is a lasting investment in dignity, opportunity and community resilience. By creating safer classrooms and securing reliable access to clean water for more than 230 learners, Karo Platinum and Masimba Holdings have addressed two fundamental enablers of human development: quality education and basic health. The project has transformed the daily school experience by giving learners a safer place to learn, educators a more functional environment in which to teach, and the broader school community the confidence that essential services can be delivered in a sustainable and practical manner.

This initiative demonstrates responsible mining in action: listening to local needs, working through meaningful partnerships, and delivering durable community assets that will continue to benefit current and future generations. Its value lies not only in the infrastructure delivered, but in the hope, stability and opportunity it creates for learners and families in the surrounding rural communities.

For these reasons, the Katawa Primary School Education and Water Access Project is a compelling example of corporate social responsibility with measurable, sustainable impact and is highly deserving of recognition through the Chrome Dinner Awards Corporate and Social Responsibility Award.

Enhancing education and water access at Katawa Primary School

Located a few kilometres away from the Karo Platinum Mine construction site, Katawa Primary School serves more than 230 learners who previously studied in repurposed farm sheds without access to safe drinking water. Following a severe storm that rendered one of the school buildings unusable, learning conditions deteriorated significantly, leaving children exposed to the elements and classrooms severely overcrowded.

In response, Karo Platinum partnered with its contractor, Masimba Holdings, to construct a new classroom block and re-establish a secure and conducive learning environment. Karo Platinum also drilled a borehole and installed a solar-powered pump to ensure consistent access to clean drinking water on the school premises.

These infrastructure upgrades have led to marked improvements in school attendance, teaching conditions and overall health. Learners and educators now benefit from safe water access, reducing the incidence of waterborne illnesses and fostering a healthier, more productive educational setting.

Today, Katawa Primary School is a testament to resilience and collaborative impact. What began as an urgent intervention has evolved into a story of transformation – demonstrating that, through strategic partnerships and shared commitment, lasting change is not only possible but achievable.

