

# InFocus



A magazine of the UN in South Africa

Vol. 3, Issue 1. February 2020



**Why the United Nations remains relevant to South Africa**

**FAO urges the public to stick to healthy diets**

**Edward K. Ndopu: Winner of the inaugural UN in South Africa Partnership Award**

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A magazine of the UN in South Africa  
Vol. 3, Issue 1. February 2020

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## Message from the United Nations Resident Coordinator

This year marks the beginning of the Decade of Action (2020-2030) "for accelerating sustainable solutions to all the world's biggest challenges — ranging from poverty and gender to climate change, inequality and closing the finance gap." It is the decade during which the United Nations is calling on all global citizens to intensify their energies in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The United Nations in South Africa is collaborating closely with the Government in finalizing the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework that will guide the UN's work in support of the country's National Development Plan. Work has already started to ensure that South Africa attains the SDGs by 2030, and we are starting to see progress in some areas, albeit at a slow rate.

But as the UN assessment of SDGs implementation worldwide has highlighted, while "progress is being made in many places...overall, action to meet the Goals is not yet advancing at the speed or scale required. 2020 needs to usher in a decade of ambitious action to deliver the Goals by 2030."

I call upon all UN staff in South Africa to scale up their programmes and cooperation in support of the Government as it accelerates its development plans in the fight against poverty, unemployment and inequality. 🌍

# Why the United Nations remains relevant to South Africa

By Nardos Bekele-Thomas



Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms. Naledi Pandor with UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres at the General Assembly in New York. Photo: DIRCO.

The United Nations' role in ending apartheid is well documented; what is less known is its relevance to a democratic South Africa. As the world marked the UN's 74<sup>th</sup> birthday amidst concerns over its ability to finance an ambitious development agenda, it is time for a sober reflection on why the global body remains relevant to SA.

SA was a founding member of the UN in 1945 before it was suspended in 1974 due to its apartheid policy. It resumed full membership in 1994 and since then, it is no exaggeration that its sway within the organization has grown by leaps and bounds. 2019 marks the third time SA is a member of the UN Security Council, a feat very few countries have enjoyed. Being a member of the council—representing Africa on two-year terms—has accorded the country the privilege of a coveted seat at the agenda-setting table where threats to global peace and security are discussed and decisions made.

Holding a seat on the council undoubtedly entails readiness to shoulder global responsibilities. And on many occasions, particularly on African issues, SA has done remarkably well, assuming responsibilities on

issues ranging from peacemaking and peacekeeping to humanitarian intervention and economic help to neighbours. With more than 1,160 personnel serving in peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and South Sudan, SA is currently the eleventh biggest contributor in Africa to UN peacekeeping, and the 17<sup>th</sup> biggest in world.

SA's influence within the UN outspreads political and economic matters to include values and principles that former President Nelson Mandela stood for. For instance, his birthday (18 July) is now observed throughout the world thanks to his dedication to human rights. It was a first for the UN to recognize an individual's birthday as an international day.

As a strong believer in the UN, SA is an ardent supporter of multilateralism. Its foreign policy seeks to strengthen multilateralism and pursue dialogue through regional and global institutions, including the UN, the centre of diplomacy. In the words of UN Secretary-General António Guterres, "Global challenges require global solutions," a recognition that global threats can only be confronted through dialogue and international cooperation.

The end of apartheid in SA did not mark the end of under-development for the historically marginalized but presented the country with an opportunity to define a new development path for itself. This new journey meant that the UN had to reconsider its own role in supporting these noble developmental objectives.

Over the years, the UN Development system can point notable contributions made to the development of the democratic state, ranging from support to the development of what is now a sophisticated legislative framework to direct programme implementation to strengthen delivery across various mandates.

The SA Government is finalizing its five-year programme, the Medium Term Strategic Framework. Once concluded, the framework will guide the UN's programme in the country, a demonstration that the UN has no separate programme of its own in SA.

As we conclude our current programme in SA, this gives us an opportunity to reflect on some of the contributions of the UN over the past five years. Some notable examples include the work our agencies continue to do in support of SA's transition to a low carbon economy. Our lead programme in this area, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, supports SA in reframing policies and practices around sustainability to foster economic growth, create jobs and reduce poverty and strengthen the ecological foundations of the economy.

Other examples include our technical support to SA's recently concluded process of defining a national minimum wage. To this end, the UN worked with the government, employers and labour unions in pushing for a minimum wage for poorly-paid employees. We have also been intimately involved in supporting the goal of universal health coverage and working with the government in planning the National Health Insurance. Our work on health issues has seen major advances in strengthening SA's response to HIV/AIDS working with several national partners.

We are working with Government and other partners in the field of education in efforts to make the sector directly relevant to the SA's skills needs, while also supporting the government in addressing the scourge of gender-based violence and provide advice on agriculture, food security and nutrition. There is also ongoing work to strengthen the social protection system to cover vulnerable communities who may not be protected by the current framework and to cushion them from falling deeper into extreme poverty.

Several UN agencies continue to assist the government in supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Most recently, we have been instrumental in repatriating dozens of families who were threatened by last month's violence against foreign nationals. Through our agencies we are working with the government on some of the most challenging issues facing SA today—the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution as well as crime and corruption.

Still, it is important to note that the UN's assistance to member states is much more widespread and extends well beyond a cursory look at the size of its budget. Dozens of experts from different UN agencies work daily with their counterparts in government departments where they provide technical advice on specialized sectors including health, education, labour and information technology.

The UN's flagship reports and score cards allow countries to measure progress on how they are improving the lives of their citizens and to gauge how they compare with each other. As a source of data, UN's technical reports offer credible statistics and advice to policy makers and researchers.

There are many other areas in which the UN and SA are working together to fight poverty, reduce inequality and end gender-based violence. The organization is a partner in development in which members can take advantage of the assistance and opportunities it offers. The UN contributed to the end of apartheid; its commitment to assist in ending extreme poverty in SA remains strong. 🌍

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*Nardos Bekele-Thomas is the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in South Africa.*

# Communities hailed on World AIDS Day



UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima with Deputy President David Mabuza at the World AIDS Day event.

Communities played a central role in the commemoration of this year's World AIDS Day in South Africa, which was held in the rural community of Orkney, in the North West Province.

At the invitation of the Government of South Africa, the UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima, commemorated her first World AIDS Day as the head of UNAIDS in the local community. Ms. Byanyima paid tribute to the role of communities in the response to HIV/AIDS, including communities of people living with HIV and communities of women, girls and others at higher risk of HIV or affected by it.

Ms. Byanyima told the audience of several thousand people that it was an honour to mark World AIDS Day in South Africa—a country that was late to respond to HIV but that had made huge strides over the past decade and now had more than five million people on treatment. She noted, however, that there was still a long way to go, especially to protect women and girls.

“Enough is enough. All women and girls must have the right to choose if they can have sex and with whom, and how they protect themselves. We need to bring power, equality and agency to all young women and girls,” she said.

The UNAIDS head said people must never accept that those living with HIV are still dying of AIDS. “It is not a question of science. It is a question of inequality,

powerlessness and exclusion. The system is still failing those who are marginalized,” she said.

South Africa's Deputy President and Chair of the South Africa National AIDS Council, David Mabuza, told the World AIDS Day event audience that his country's AIDS response had succeeded, thanks to the work of communities and the contributions of activists and development partners.

“We could not achieve this without partnerships and support from our global partners,” the Vice President said. “That is why we must appreciate the contribution of the global campaign by UNAIDS that has galvanized political leadership, civil society and the private sector into coherent action. Community action remains an important pillar in making change happen, and in shaping the policy agenda and outcomes.”

He noted that there was still much work to be done, including intensifying HIV prevention and tackling contributing factors, including providing comprehensive sexuality education and ending gender-based violence.

Mr. Mabuza also said he was pleased to be joined by Ms. Byanyima. “She is an activist of note and a distinguished advocate for human rights and development,” he said. “We have no doubt that her vast experience in political leadership and human development will take us forward in the struggle to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.”

In the days prior to the World AIDS Day commemoration, Ms. Byanyima met with political and civil society leaders, women activists and others to hear their concerns and understand the challenges and opportunities facing South Africa.

Prior to the commemoration, Ms. Byanyima visited a clinic in Soshanguve, outside Pretoria, to observe in action project Ritshidze (“saving our lives”), which aims to improve the quality of HIV and tuberculosis service delivery in South Africa by empowering people living with HIV to monitor the health services they receive and to advocate for necessary changes. The project is funded by the United States with support from UNAIDS.

“We can spend billions building beautiful clinics to distribute millions of pills,” Ms. Byanyima said. “But only if we empower communities at the grass roots to hold service providers accountable and call out injustices will we make a real difference for people.”

# International Anti-Corruption Day



Officials at the commemoration of International Anti-Corruption Day.

South Africa continues to face challenges on issues of corruption and money laundering. According to various reports, a lot of money has been siphoned off from state coffers through corrupt means. Addressing the Financial Times Africa Summit held in London in October, President Cyril Ramaphosa acknowledged that corruption has cost South Africa as much as R1 trillion (US\$714 billion) over the past decade.

The President has consistently acknowledged the corrosive effects of corruption. In his State of the Nation Addresses delivered in February and June 2019, the President highlighted the challenges confronting South Africa arising from worsening corruption. He expressed a commitment to strengthen and intensify efforts to build an ethical state intolerant of corruption.

The government has prioritized the investigation and prosecution of people or entities involved in corrupt activities. In November 2019, ten suspects were arrested on charges of corruption and money laundering. During the same month, a member of parliament was also arrested for alleged corruption.

Another significant effort by government included the development of a comprehensive National Anti-Corruption Strategy. The strategy, which is now being finalized, is being developed in collaboration with civil society organizations.

On 9 December, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), partnered with the government and the University of South Africa (UNISA) to commemorate the International Anti-Corruption Day under the theme, “United against Corruption: Building a Culture of Accountability for Sustainable Development”. More than 400 delegates attended the event, representing national authorities, civil society and the private sector.

Before the commencement of the proceedings, members of civil society presented the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Senzo Mchunu, with a petition demanding the prosecution of all individuals implicated in corruption and state capture. The petition was later read out to delegates during the event, after which the minister reassured the delegates that the government would attend to the demands of the civil society.

In his message, the minister outlined recent measures the government has taken to reduce wastage, which include reducing fringe benefits for cabinet ministers. He also informed the delegates that his department was in the process of finalizing the establishment of the Ethics and Integrity Technical Assistance Unit that would play a role in addressing corruption in the public service.

Nardos Bekele-Thomas, the UN in South Africa Resident Coordinator, pledged the UN support to the

government in calculating the direct and indirect costs of corruption. She emphasized the importance of elevating the discussion on corruption and mobilizing society behind national efforts to fight it. She added that “we must view all forms of corrupt practices, big or small, with the contempt they deserve and respond to them with decisiveness.” She further urged the government to deal with all kinds of corruption equally and decisively with both high ranking and low-ranking public representatives with the same zeal and determination. The delegates received a comprehensive update on the recent successes by key institutions of the criminal justice system in investigating corruption cases.

The head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, Lt. Gen. Godfrey Lebeya, provided more insights into the investigation and arrest of ten suspects who are implicated on corruption charges in a R600 million (US\$42.9 million) tender deal in Amathole District Municipality in Eastern Cape Province. The Head of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU), Adv. Andy Mothibi, shared information about the recent establishment of the SIU Tribunal to finalize matters referred for civil litigation following the conclusion of investigations by the Unit. The National Director of Public Prosecution, Adv. Shamila Batohi, while sharing some updates regarding the establishment of the investigative directorate within the National Prosecuting Authority, warned against the perception held by the general public that the state is not dealing with corruption.

The programme included the signing of “My Anti-Corruption Pledge”, where all delegates pledged to be responsible and honest citizen who neither pay nor take bribes. The reciting of the pledge was followed by the signing ceremony, which was led by Minister Mchunu, Ms. Bekele-Thomas, heads of anti-corruption agencies, the National Director of Public Prosecution and all other senior and prominent representatives of government, civil society and the private sector. 🌐

# Human Development that looks beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today



Members of diplomatic corps, partners and UN staff at the Human Development Report launch.

The 2019 Human Development Report published by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) looks at inequalities in human development with new lenses. The report, titled “Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today” assesses what type of inequalities are becoming important today, how they differ around the world and among population groups, and how they are changing. The rationale is to encourage a better understanding of what is it that experts need to analyze and better respond to the issues that are making societies in one sense fall apart over the outcomes of development choices that they have made.

To commemorate the global launch of the report, UNDP South Africa brought together members of the diplomatic corps, representatives from the Government of South Africa, the business community, other development partners, academia, and members of the civil society. The Resident Coordinator of the UN in South Africa, Nardos Bekele-

Thomas, delivered the opening address in which she underscored the importance of the human development approach, emphasizing that “human development is not for a few or for most, but for everyone”.

According to the report’s accompanying Human Development Index (HDI), Africa has experienced one of the most significant improvements in human development. Between 1990 and 2018, life expectancy increased by more than 11 years. And for the first time this year, an African country—Seychelles—has moved into the very high human development group. Others are rising in the ranks as well, with South Africa as one of four countries which are now in the high human development group.

In his address, the head of the Secretariat in the National Planning Commission, Tshediso Matona, talked about how the report resonated with national issues and how the country could benefit from a similar report focused only on South Africa.

Reflecting on the “beyond income” aspect of the report, Mr. Matona emphasized the need for South Africa to address income inequality before “we can go beyond income”. He further conveyed government’s commitment to work towards leaving no one behind, thus attaining better results in years to come and extended an invitation to UNDP to assist in this quest. The Portuguese Ambassador Manuel Carvalho commended the UN in South Africa for its tireless efforts to focus on the human aspect of society, which he cited as an economic stimulator. This was followed by a symbolic launch of the report with all present receiving a copy of the report before the report’s presentation and subsequent discussions.

This was followed by presentations by the UNDP Country Office and a panel discussion presided over by Dr. Ayodele Odusola, the UNDP Resident Representative in South Africa, featuring Dr. Neva Makgetla, Senior Economist at Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies and Ms. Simmi Pillay, the Acting Director for Governance and Compliance Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Income and gender inequality as well as new inequalities around tertiary education, and the seismic effects of technology and the climate crisis were some of the issues discussed. The inclusion of people living with disabilities in policy and planning processes was also a key highlight.

Dr. Odusola announced that the country office was working on the South African Human Development Report and were happy to work with the Government of South Africa and all relevant stakeholders to see it to fruition. 🌍

# OPINION: Coordinated Global action needed to control armyworm

A new US\$500 million initiative by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations is leading the way. By Rémi Nono Womdim

Dealing with transboundary pests is tricky at the best of times. Standards, practices, capacity levels and engagement vary across countries and regions, and responses are often ad hoc and ineffective. However, matters become even more complex when the pest in question flies over borders, threatens the food security and livelihoods of millions, and causes severe environmental and economic damage along the way. Fall Armyworm is such a pest. Step forward FAO with the “Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control”, a pioneering initiative that aims to mobilize US\$500 million over 2020–22 to take radical, direct and coordinated measures to fight Fall Armyworm at a global level.

## A brief introduction to the Fall Armyworm

Fall Armyworm is an invasive moth originating in the Americas. It prefers to eat maize but also feeds on 80 or more other crops, including rice, sorghum, millet, sugarcane, vegetable crops and cotton. Once established in an area, Fall Armyworm is almost impossible to eradicate and very difficult to stop spreading—a sprightly adult can fly up to several hundred kilometres! Indeed, since its arrival in West Africa nearly four years ago, Fall Armyworm has already spread across the African continent; and beyond Africa, to more than a dozen Asian countries, including China and India. Europe could be next. It’s hard to calculate the global extent of Fall Armyworm damage but, based on 2018 estimates from 12 countries, maize yield losses in Africa could be as high as 17.7 million tonnes annually. This equates to 40% of Africa’s annual maize yield or US\$4.6 billion. The most direct impact is on the continent’s smallholder maize farmers, most of whom rely on the crop to stave off hunger and poverty.

## What is the Global Action?

FAO’s new Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control will massively scale up FAO projects and activities to reach out to hundreds of millions of affected farmers. The Global Action has three key objectives: i) establish global coordination and regional collaboration on monitoring, early warning, and Integrated Pest Management of Fall Armyworm; ii) reduce associated crop losses; and iii) lower the risk of further spread. The Global Action will target the three regions that have experienced a Fall Armyworm invasion in recent years—Africa, the Near East and Asia—and align with FAO’s new data-driven Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which aims to support achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals by pairing the most developed countries with those with the highest poverty and hunger rates.

## Knowledge sharing, innovation and research

Paramount in the Global Action will be coordinated efforts to spread knowledge and information to smallholders affected by Fall Armyworm, especially through the establishment or scaling up of dedicated national task forces. These task forces will both bolster and go beyond current FAO initiatives, such as the Farmer Field School programme, reaching into the most isolated communities.

The Global Action will also promote biological pest control and other innovative field practices, as well as technologies such as the open source Fall Armyworm Monitoring and Early Warning System (FAMEWS) tool, which uses artificial intelligence to help farmers with smartphones detect Fall Armyworm damage and choose appropriate response actions. As a near real-time data centre, FAMEWS allows for better estimates on pest spread and crop damage, which helps in targeting interventions. There is no one-size-fits-all remedy. Combating Fall Armyworm will require bespoke, science-based solutions that take account of the specific context of each infested area. However, knowing what works best, and where, will require further research. Local knowledge and the decades’ worth of experience of dealing with Fall Armyworm in the Americas will also be important guides.

## An auspicious beginning

It is fitting that December’s launch of the Global Action came just two days after the official opening of the FAO-led UN International Year of Plant Health 2020 (IYPH). The IYPH underlines the importance of plant health to both planetary and human health, and urges action against the further spread of pests and diseases, particularly due to climate change, trade and other factors. Ultimately, the success of the Global Action, IYPH 2020 and other plant health initiatives will be determined by the ability of a broad range of stakeholders to work together for a common goal. FAO will play a lead role in driving this partnership model and, in the words of FAO Director-General, Qu Dongyu, commit “to putting the knowledge, experience and lessons learned from stakeholders and partners at the service of farmers throughout the world to stem the global threat of this pest”. 🌱

*Rémi Nono Womdim is the Deputy Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.*



# Japan funds UNIDO single-use plastic project



The Government of Japan and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have signed a funding agreement for a project to support a transition from conventional plastics to sustainable alternatives in South Africa.

The funding support, almost US\$1.9m (R26.8m) for the UNIDO project, was announced during the Group of 20 (G20) Osaka summit in June when the Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, held a meeting with the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa. The initiative supports the G20's Blue Ocean Vision which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050.

UNIDO will work with South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial

Research (CSIR) to develop an action plan to strengthen the capacity of local industry to manufacture alternative materials and build up capacities for plastic recycling.

Recently, bio-degradable plastics have gained attention as one approach to deal with the scourge of plastic pollution. However, when bringing new materials onto the market, particular attention needs to be paid to ensure that the overall environmental footprint is not increased and that new types of waste are not created that cannot be recycled contributing to the amount of waste; or hindering efforts to increase circularity. The project will help to assess all possible scenarios and choose appropriate material for South African contexts and will suggest the steps needed to set up an enabling environment.

At the project launch ceremony, Japan's Ambassador to South Africa, Norio Maruyama, said the signing ceremony marked the concrete achievement of what was discussed at the G20 in June 2019. He emphasized the importance of the collaboration of South African companies in the project.

Deputy Minister Nomalungelo Gina of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic) referred to the key objectives of South Africa's National Development Plan, saying, "The dtic welcomes the support by the Japanese Government and the partnership between UNIDO and the CSIR, since biodegradable plastics are just being introduced locally."

The CSIR Group Executive, Khungeka Njobe, said, "We look forward to partnering with government and industry in addressing the very important issue of waste plastic."

According to Khaled El Mekwad, the UNIDO Representative and head of the South Africa regional office, "Such an initiative will be a model of good practice which can be disseminated to other countries in the SADC region.

Trudi Makhaya, Economic Advisor to President Cyril Ramaphosa, welcomed this initiative, saying, "We hope that from this partnership there is agreement that there will be a lot of innovation but also a lot of practical applications of the innovations to new industries and new forms of economic activity that are inclusive, take communities along, and will ensure that this new economy does not reproduce some of the flaws of the past." 🌍



Officials at the funding agreement in Pretoria led by UNIDO Representative Mr. Khaled El Mekwad (left seated) and the Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Norio Maruyama.



# UNICEF celebrates World Children's Day



The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) this year celebrated the World Children's Day with a visit to the Isibindi Safe Park in Cape Town. The programme is supported by UNICEF's Clipper Race Charity Partner.

The Isibindi Safe Park in Grabouw, is a place where children from the local community can come to play, learn, receive love and are provided with a safe space. It is a programme that has been developed by the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) in response to the needs of vulnerable families in South Africa. During the visit, the Clipper Race crew members had the opportunity for round table discussions with the people helping to make a difference in Grabouw.

On the day of the visit, Holly Williams, a pediatric surgeon from Emeryville, California, USA, raced the full Clipper Race circumnavigation on board the UNICEF team yacht. She has so far raised more than US\$10,000 for UNICEF. Reflecting on the visit, she said: "We talk about charity, and so much of the time you wonder about where your money goes and if it's a drop in a bucket and if it makes the differences that you are hoping for. This is an example of the tremendous differences that continue on, multiplying fivefold, far beyond what you thought it would do—and it's sustainable."

Working within the Safe Park was a dedicated group of child and youth care workers whose role is to provide one-on-one sessions to children who need them the most. This scheme, known as the Isibindi Ezikoleni Model, provides care based on the individual child's needs and its goal is to improve the well-being of vulnerable and at-risk learners, particularly students who are at risk of dropping out of school. The role of the child and youth

care worker is to promote the importance of education and health and to assist with the transition into adulthood.

Keith Baker, a retired company director from Essex, UK, raced as part of the Qingdao team for five legs, said: "We have met an incredibly positive group of children supported by some terrific support workers in what seems to be a difficult and deprived area. There are bags of enthusiasm, energy and passion around what they are doing."

The youth and child care workers also work closely with the children's families. They hold home visits and family conferences, helping to strengthen the parents' communication skills, making sure that young people have a support system outside of the Safe Park.

One of the highlights of the crews' visit was meeting with the Isibindi Youth Forum group. This group, run by students from the Safe Park, ranges in age from 14 to 21 years old. According to one of the members, Dwayne, "We try to find solutions for common problems. Outside this Safe Park it's rare to find role models. We are surrounded by gangs and abusers. But we want to fight the darkness." The Youth Forum members work together with the youth and child care workers to help identify high risk students. But as students, their advantage is they study and socialize with their peers and help create change from within.

Ian Wiggin, skipper of the gifted UNICEF's Clipper Race charity team said: "Speaking to the Youth Forum was amazing. There were some incredibly motivated, passionate and articulate role models. The older children are very fired up to change the situation that they, and the people around them, are in." During the Clipper 2017-18 Race, the crew, supporters and race partners around the world lent their support and raised more than £374,000 (R7.02 million) which will help save the lives of thousands of children. For the third consecutive edition, the Clipper Race has empowered the team yacht to UNICEF to help raise awareness of the issues that impact children across the globe. The hope is that during the upcoming Clipper 2019-20 Race, the total amount of money raised since the partnership began would pass the £1 million (R18.8 million) mark. The amount raised so far in the current edition is £174,000 (R3.3 million).

UNICEF relies entirely on voluntary contributions and donations. Its life-saving work wouldn't be possible without the extraordinary generosity of its fundraisers and corporate partners who help raise vital resources for UNICEF's work across the globe. 🌍

# Promoting a Just Transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies in Southern Africa

Climate change and environmental challenges are having far-reaching impacts on economies, jobs and social development in many parts of the world. Countries in Southern Africa are generally low emitters of greenhouse gases. However, as climate change knows no borders, the sub-region suffers from the accelerating impact of climate change and environmental degradation.

Experience has shown that environmental risks, natural hazards and ecological scarcities affect the poor and the disadvantaged the most. Moreover, climate change is worsening some of the major development challenges of the continent, such as poverty, high youth unemployment, high levels of inequality and the lack of decent jobs.

The good news is that greening and “climate-proofing” an economy come with vast opportunities. In fact, opportunities for gains may be largest in developing and emerging economies. The large-scale investments that enable a green restructuring of our economies can foster sustainable enterprises and drive job creation, skills development, improved job quality and increased incomes, as well as advances in equity, gender equality and social inclusion.

These gains are not automatic. They require the right policies that respond to specific challenges facing each country and seize opportunities by integrating environmental, social and decent work elements.

In response to these challenges and opportunities, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Pretoria Country Office held a training course on “Promoting a Just Transition to Low-carbon and Climate-Resilient Economies

in Southern Africa” late last year in Johannesburg. The training, which was organized in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC-ILO) and Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) South Africa, was attended by delegates from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa.

The objectives of the training were for participants to deepen their knowledge of the key issues of green jobs, Just Transition and social justice, with the guidance of international development experts. Participants learned about ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition; the interlinkages between the natural environment and the world of work and how each impact the other; and best practices from Southern Africa and country-specific Just Transition examples.

Participants were also expected to be able to co-create solutions to complex problems that contribute to creating more sustainable societies by using international guidelines to help countries manage the transition to low-carbon economies; fostering decent work on a large scale; learn from best practices and experiences in the region and network with Just Transition experts and prominent actors in the field.

Following the official opening of the workshop by the ILO South Africa Director, Joni Masabayana, Prof. Mthunzi Mdwaba, the vice-president for the ILO Governing Body and global spokesperson for employers, shared the global context and central elements that facilitate a Just Transition. He talked about the importance of constantly placing people at the centre and of ensuring human-centred outcomes. “We don’t pay enough attention to the people, and to the realities of people,” he said. *(continues on next page)*



(continuing from previous page)

According to Prof. Mdwaba, the biggest challenges to managing a Just Transition are policy coherence, sustainability and implementation. He spoke about the importance of trust, inclusion and leadership for a Just Transition. “We must agree on the how—how do we do it together, so that no one is left behind?”

The opening session laid a foundation for the lively discussions that marked the week-long training. The participants, who represented ministries of labour and environment, municipalities, organized business and organized labour, as well as civil society, grassroots and community organizations, all shared their perspectives and insights, which created an open platform of peer-to-peer learning and cross-fertilization of experiences and ideas.

Throughout the week, presentations were held on the complex interlinkages between decent work and the natural environment; on the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition; and on the pre-conditions of gender equality and leaving no one behind in a Just Transition. After a session on policies for a Just Transition, participants delved into policy areas such as skills development and green works, and further into the South African experience of reviewing the National Development Plan Chapter 5, developing the Low Emissions Development Strategy and the National Employment Vulnerability Assessments, and the Green Fund. Presentations were intertwined with group discussions, question-and-answer sessions and interactive exercises.

Three panel discussions were held. The first was with grassroots organizations and environmental activists who made strong cases for the vital role of bottom-up grassroots initiatives in paving the way for a Just Transition. The second panel was devoted to social dialogue and why it was at the core of Just Transitions, and had representatives of government, organized business and labour, civil society and youth. The third was composed of researchers whose discussions focused on the transition from coal to renewable energy and on “the how” of ensuring a just transition.

A highlight of the week was the study tour of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Smart Places Cluster, where they were shown solar PV testing facilities, electrical cars and various labs, and learned about the CSIR low-carbon energy system through solar PV, wind and biogas for an Energy Autonomous Campus.

An action planning session rounded off the training week. Participants grouped into their respective countries and discussed the next steps towards a Just Transition. There were many commitments and ideas for follow-up actions. On the last day of the workshop, when group representatives presented their action plans, it became obvious that the real hard work will only come after the training, as multiple actors work together to transform their societies and economies into sustainable, low-carbon and climate resilient ones, where social justice is more than a dream but a reality. 🌍

## Face-to-Face fundraising in South Africa

By Irene Nosipho Mhlongo

Face-to-Face fundraising in South Africa goes beyond simply pledging money to give to those who are deemed to be in need. Rather, it speaks of a spirit of “ubuntu” which emphasizes unity and a shared responsibility amongst citizens to participate in contributing to the difference they wish to see. It is about those who go beyond the call of duty by pledging monthly contributions to UNICEF South Africa with the intention of making a meaningful difference to the lives of millions of disadvantaged children in the country.

Face-to-Face fundraising takes place in public spaces such as shopping malls as well as various UNICEF-organized events. The main objective is to engage with the public in effective and compelling ways so that they sign up to become UNICEF’s regular donors. Donors are individuals above the age of 23 who show an interest in the work of the organization and are in a secure financial position to make monthly donations.

With a presence in South Africa since the dawn of democracy and with 73 years of experience in almost every country in the world, UNICEF continues, with its partners and supporters, to ensure that the health, education and protection needs of children are met. UNICEF’s Face-to-Face fundraisers are at the forefront of this movement by educating members of the public on its work and giving them an opportunity to leave no child behind. 🌍



# UN Women launches the Unstereotype Alliance

At the 2019 Loeries Creative Awards for Africa and Middle East, UN Women South Africa announced the launch of the Unstereotype Alliance (UA) South African Chapter in collaboration with founding ally members the Loeries and the Marketing Association of South Africa both leading organizations with an important voice in South Africa's marketing and advertising industry. Facebook and Google were also named as the first paying members to join Unstereotype Alliance South Africa at \$7,000 per annum for three years.

In the past two years, the Unstereotype Alliance has built momentum behind notable achievements such as, including unsteretyped judging criteria as part of the Cannes Lions jury criterion and expanding its footprint through national chapters in Brazil and UAE. The Alliance has commissioned original research and developed best practice playbooks and measurement tools to help marketers and agency teams create more progressive unsteretyped communications. In addition, it created a global open-sourced single measurement tool to help discriminate between progressive and regressive gender portrayals of characters in advertising.

UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative, Anne Githuku-Shongwe said, "The Unstereotype Alliance challenges companies to use their massive advertising power and influence for good and towards creating a more gender equal society. Stereotyping and portrayals of women as non-intellectual, weak and subservient to men have detrimental effects especially on young girls."



*UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative, Anne Githuku-Shongwe announces the Unstereotype Alliance founding members at Loeries Seminar of Creativity 2019. Photo: Al Nicoll/Gallo Images/Loeries 2019.*

Andrew Human, CEO of the Loeries said, "We are delighted to be an ally partner of the Unstereotype Alliance. South African advertisers for a long time have been tackling the issues of stereotypes and I am proud that the Loeries jury is alive to these issues and are looking out for them. It is our strong belief that advertising can lead change in society."

The Unstereotype Alliance believes that stereotypes reflect deep-rooted ideas of femininity and masculinity. Negative, diminished conceptions of women and girls are one of the greatest barriers to gender equality. Harmful gender stereotypes have profound consequences. They are behind different forms of discrimination, from limiting women's leadership roles to perpetuating violence against women and to reducing their economic opportunity. Advertising is a powerful driver to change perceptions and impact social norms. Research shows that progressive or unsteretyped

advertising has 25% more impact and improves purchase intent by 18% (Kantar, 2018).

During the Loeries Creative Week, Dove and UN Women also held a joint Masterclass on removing gender-based stereotypes in all media and advertising content. The Masterclass attracted more than 100 participants from the advertising and creative industry and private sector who were keen to support the Unstereotype Alliance. Many creatives offered to use their art and content to address issues of GBV during the 16 days of activism and most companies expressed strong interest in joining the Unstereotype Alliance South Africa chapter.

A Unstereotype Alliance national chapter with a strong private sector presence will be a good case study on how the creative industry can contribute to addressing issues of gender equality, women's empowerment and gender-based violence in the country. 🌍

# First NGO and multi-stakeholder regional consultations held

By Markku Aikomus

The first consultations between the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency's Southern Africa office, non-governmental organizations and multi-stakeholders took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in September. The forum, co-hosted by UNHCR and the Nelson Mandela Foundation under the theme, "Whole of Society Approach Working better together" brought together a diverse group of participants from Southern African countries.

The forum kicked off amidst UNHCR's global regionalization and decentralization process which aims for more agile, efficient and innovative organization to be able to better respond to new crises and the needs of forcibly displaced communities and host communities.

"We must act together to respond to refugee situations and help the displaced recover their lives," stated George Okoth-Obbo, the UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for operations. "It needs to be a whole of society effort including humanitarian and development actors, civil society, private sector, host communities and most importantly, refugees." UNHCR works with hundreds of funded, operational and advocacy partners to ensure that the rights and needs of displaced people are met. The main goal of this vast network of partnerships is to ensure better outcomes by combining and leveraging complementary resources and working together in a transparent, respectful and mutually beneficial way.

The World Bank Group—one of the participants—and UNHCR have been expanding collaboration in recent years, including through a series of joint analytical work in Africa. In addition, within the Poverty Alleviation Coalition, UNHCR, the World Bank Partnership for Economic Inclusion

and 12 NGOs are working towards the common vision of increasing self-reliance, economic and social inclusion of refugees and host communities by sustainably increasing income-earning opportunities.

Jos Verbeek, Manager and Special Representative of the World Bank to the UN and World Trade Organization attending from Geneva had a clear message for the forum: "To address one of the biggest crisis faced by our generation, the World Bank Group recognizes that all those involved, be it humanitarian, peace or development actors, need to work together in a complementary manner."

The majority of solutions to forced displacement continue to be local, driven by regional and local politics and opportunities. UNHCR's decentralization process aims to empower field-based agencies to make the right decisions without unnecessary delays. To better align with the geographical coverage of the UN humanitarian and development system as a whole, UNHCR has recently opened seven global Regional Bureaux including one in Southern Africa headquartered in Pretoria, which co-organized the consultations.

"The regionalization of UNHCR provides a real platform to connect with both the regional dimension of the crises and to be a support to the country operations," said Marco Rotelli, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)'s Special Advisor and Regional Representative for Africa, who attended from Nairobi. Twenty-six-year-old Congolese refugee Barthelemy Mwanza attended the event and enjoyed the conversations. As a UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council member, Barthelemy had earlier this year participated in the UNHCR Global NGO Consultations in Geneva. "I feel that these consultations were

able to address more regional issues which are closer to us here," said Mr. Mwanza. "Refugees also seemed more comfortable in standing up and expressing their views here."

During the Consultations, Dr. Esther Mahlangu, internationally acclaimed multi-award winning icon of indigenous South Africa (Ndebele) artistic heritage and a cultural entrepreneur described as a "national treasure," received the first UNHCR Southern Africa NGO and Multi-Stakeholder Award in recognition of inclusivity and empowerment. The inclusivity and values of community that she has espoused and demonstrated in her work and life are the very same ones that UNHCR, through the "whole of society approach", seeks to foster. The award was presented by Norio Maruyama, the Ambassador of Japan to South Africa.

Valentin Tapsoba, the UNHCR's Regional Director for Southern Africa, reiterated the organization's excitement to host the forum with the Nelson Mandela Foundation. "No one in modern politics can match the compassion and focus on people's welfare to that held by Nelson Mandela," he said. "We are never as effective as when we work together in bringing in compassion, resources and expertise to respond to humanitarian situations."

On behalf of UNHCR, Pamela Moore, the Chargé d'Affaires of the High Commission of Canada to South Africa, handed a framed photo of the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata with Nelson Mandela to Sello Hatang, the Chief Executive Officer of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. There were colourful performances by triple Grammy award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir as well as MTV award-winning South African electro hop music duo Locnville. 🌍

# Migration: South African youth visit Ethiopia



South African delegation at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa.

In an effort to increase awareness of migration as a key driver of the development agenda, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) office in South Africa supported an educational visit of South African youth to the African Union Commission headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, late last year. The visit was the culmination of preparatory work dating back to the Mkhaya Migrant Award Essay Competition of 2016.

Seven winners of the essay competition—an initiative by South Africa’s Department of Home Affairs in response to the xenophobic attacks of 2015—came from across the country’s provincial universities. The aim of their visit was to provide students insights into how decisions on migration issues are made in Africa. The students also visited the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Addis

Ababa University’s Institute for Peace and Security Studies as well as the Special Liaison Unit to gain insights on multilateralism.

The delegation, which was led by Lily Sanya, the IOM Chief of Mission in South Africa, was accompanied by officials from IOM and the departments of Home Affairs and of Social Development.

“This is a strategic partnership that we hope will lay a foundation for youth engagement at the highest platform and also identify a possible youth ambassador to work with on future social cohesion programmes specifically as a tool towards realizing an integrated continent guided by the aspirations of the African Union’s Agenda 2063,” said Ms. Sanya.

In her welcome remarks, Maureen Achieng, the IOM Chief of Mission in Ethiopia, said: “Despite the bleak

backdrop against which this visit is taking place, it was planned months ago. I come out of it heartened by the genuine interest I sense on the part of the Government of South Africa and the youth from that country to understand better the continental migration dynamics, and how the vexed phenomenon that is migration could be better managed for the benefit of host countries and of the migrants themselves in South Africa.”

“This visit will go a long way in empowering these young people to influence change and perceptions, drive programmes that support integration and strengthen communication at all levels within the country,” noted Peter Netshipale, the Deputy Director General of Community Development within the South Africa’s Department of Social Development.

The representative from the Department of Home Affairs, , Nolwandle Qaba, added, “This as an opportunity for the future leaders of South Africa to gain a better understanding of continental integration and its benefits. On their return home, they can channel their learnings to fellow youth and contribute to breaking stereotypes about other countries and nationalities.”

This visit further complemented IOM’s global efforts on youth and migration issues. Earlier in the year, the first International Dialogue on Migration of 2019 took place in New York. It provided a global, diverse and inclusive platform for discussions to engage the youth with not only decision makers on migration, but also with other key actors on migration and related issues. 🌍

# Business involvement in human rights abuses

During September 2019 the Regional Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) brought together civil society organisations, academic experts and companies from South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to advance accountability and access to remedy for victims of business-related human rights abuses in Southern Africa.

The sessions highlighted that many persons in the region lack access to both judicial and non-judicial remedies when they face impacts to their human rights as a result of business activities. These included forced displacement, pollution, loss of livelihood, excessive use of force by security services.

Some of the challenges highlighted in accessing remedy were the remote rural locations of many affected communities, lack of representation of women in decision-making bodies, the vulnerable situation of migrants in cases of business related impacts and conflicts of interest in governance and remedy structures. Despite these challenges, there were some positive examples of the impact of raising greater awareness around the rights of communities when violations occur, leading to more informed community members and more effective mobilization. This has led to communities obtaining compensation for harm suffered and better communication with companies. Participants highlighted that the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide a useful framework and point of reference to engage with communities about their rights and with companies about their responsibilities in relation to respecting human rights and ensuring access to remedy when abuses occur.

National Human Rights Institutions also have a key role to play, with some of these institutions in the region tackling human rights complaints against companies from individuals and communities, carrying out investigations and making recommendations to companies to address the complaints. The human rights commissions from Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe emphasised that this provided real access for victims of business-related abuses to remedy, particularly when the judiciary was not accessible and company remedy mechanisms were non-existent or inaccessible. At the same time, there are many challenges linked to lack of funding for these institutions, limitations to their legal mandates, and a small number or no regional offices and lack of enforcement of recommendations, though some institutions have found innovative solutions to enforce recommendations in partnership with courts. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission has also successfully piloted bringing Government, academia, faith-based organisations, civil society and the private sector together as partners into an Environmental Thematic Working Group to tackle business-related human rights issues.

Companies from the extractive sector also came together in a regional peer learning workshop to share good practices in integrating human rights into their operations, including by carrying out human rights due diligence, and operating specific mechanisms to monitor human rights concerns and provide access to remedy when violations occur. Challenges identified included communicating with communities in rural areas and identifying the appropriate consultation and communication methods and tools in each context, as well as challenges in ensuring respect for human rights when engaging with law enforcement officials. Positive approaches identified included establishing long-term relationships with host communities and identifying and addressing their needs through participatory and sustainable methods.

While there are many challenges in ensuring that affected communities have access to remedy when business related abuses occur, there are many examples of civil society organisations, national human rights institutions and companies taking concrete measures to both prevent such abuses and meaningfully address them when they occur. 🌍



*Attendees at the Business and Human Rights workshop.*



# Students exposed to global value chains and development in sub-Saharan Africa

By Adnan Seric

Some 40 postgraduate students, faculty members and international researchers recently went through the theoretical workings of the role of industrialization and global value chains (GVCs) and how to apply them to the sub-Saharan African region.

A two-day workshop organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Policy Research on International Services and Manufacturing (PRISM) Institute at the School of Economics at the University of Cape Town took place at the university's campus September.

A key component of the workshop was the use and analysis of data indicators and tools which can facilitate evaluation of industrial competitiveness and country participation within global and regional value chains. The focus was on introducing participants to the newly developed UNIDO Industrial Analytics Platform (IAP) through a set of interactive learning sessions.

The second day of the workshop focused on the past and current experience of sub-Saharan Africa in industrialization and GVC participation, as well as the policy lessons for the region. One particular emphasis was on the need to promote regional integration to facilitate regional value chains and increase engagement with key multinational enterprises that are coordinating the targeted GVCs.

The workshop in Cape Town was the second of a series of pilot capacity-building activities delivered by making extensive use of the IAP. The first was delivered to a group of 40 policymakers from the Thai government in July 2019. 🌍



## Boosting women's and girl's sexual and reproductive health rights

By Kgaugelo Mojapelo and Sudeshan Reddy

Despite South Africa's progressive gender equality legislation and national programmes, violence is a daily reality for many in the country with one in three children experiencing physical and sexual violence prior to reaching the age of 18.

The annual 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence was a timely reminder that girls who have been exposed to violence are at increased risk of later acquiring HIV, as well as depression, suicide and substance abuse. Survivors of sexual violence are twice as likely to develop anxiety and depression and three times more likely to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms. In addition, 16% of all HIV infections in women could be prevented if women did not experience domestic violence from their partners.

With this sobering reality in mind, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), along with the Government of South Africa and with funding from the High Commission of Canada, launched a programme in the Eastern Cape Province aimed at addressing these challenges. Titled "Count Me In", this joint initiative is designed to strengthen district-level institutions and communities in order to enable adolescent girls and young women to realize their sexual and reproductive health rights while building more effective referral, coordination, capacity building and coordination between health and social services.

The launch was preceded by a Youth Dialogue in which issues were raised around normalizing the discussion of reproductive health in often conservative, rural regions. "We need our parents to hold open conversations with us," said 14-year old Makhathini Ncebakazi, who was amongst the young participants at the youth dialogue.

In her opening remarks, Muriel Mafico, the Deputy Representative of UNICEF South Africa, reminded participants that UNICEF and the UNFPA "look forward to working together with the government, communities, as well as religious and traditional structures to improve interventions on the ground and provide support to communities, especially young." She added: "This means listening to their needs, involving them in the design and delivery of services and empowering them to hold us accountable. We must do this urgently, with determination, focus, innovation and partnership." 🌍



# UN expert calls for action to end discrimination against albinism

**O**n her first official country visit to South Africa, from 16 to 26 September 2019, the United Nations Independent Expert on the rights of persons with albinism Ms. Ikponwosa Ero met with Government, local civil society organisations and other stakeholders to discuss priorities to end violence and discrimination against persons with albinism.

“Although apartheid ended 25 years ago and an inclusive constitution was introduced, people with albinism continue to suffer grievous abuses on a number of grounds including colour and disability,” said Ero at the end of her visit in September last year.

The Constitution of South Africa and other several legal instruments all provide important protections to persons with albinism. Despite these positive elements in the legal framework and other initiatives such as the 2013 Ekurhuleni Declaration on the Rights of Persons with albinism, the Independent Expert highlighted that persons with albinism continue to face very serious human rights challenges including physical and psychological abuse and social and economic exclusion.

Stigma and discrimination against people with albinism in South Africa have led to attacks and killings. Given their minority status, an attack on some is a significant threat to all.

The Expert welcomed the Government’s efforts in working toward justice for victims and families but called for more proactive measures including more awareness-raising and prevention measures, and more efforts to effectively tackle trafficking of body parts of persons with albinism both at the national and regional level.

The Expert expressed concern that people with albinism suffer constant

ridicule and social exclusion in their own families and in society in general. Women are particularly affected by stigma, with many being abandoned by partners and spouses because of ridicule and discrimination or because they gave birth to a child with albinism. In several national languages, there are no dignified names for persons with albinism, while the predominant words used being degrading and insulting, such as monkey (inkawu), or a curse (isishawa). Bullying and insecurity are common for children attending school to the extent that some have resorted to going to special schools because they are often safer than mainstream ones.

The situation has a damaging cumulative effect on the psychosocial health and self-esteem of many people with albinism, and has resulted in depression, suicidal tendencies and an overall fear of going out in public. This fear is further compounded by security issues. The Expert called on all stakeholders to change this situation and highlight the gifts, talents and potential of people with albinism to be amazing contributors to South Africa and the world as one of the most effective ways to tackle stigma and discrimination.

Concern remains over the persistence of pervasive superstitious beliefs and lack of understanding, which continues to threaten the lives of people with albinism – particularly in rural areas with poverty, lower levels of education and high unemployment. In addition to risks of being killed and attacked, people with albinism face tremendous hurdles in accessing adequate education and healthcare. As a result of frequent visual impairment, and a lack of reasonable accommodation for them in school settings, many give up on education at an early age. They are often given low-ranking jobs or work outdoors where they are constantly exposed to the sun,

leading to skin cancer – the biggest killer of people with albinism in Africa.

Ms. Ero called for more disaggregated data and research relating to albinism in South Africa, including through adding a relevant question in the forthcoming 2021 census. The Expert also called for the inclusion of people with albinism as a protected group in the pending law on Hate Speech. The Expert welcomed the energy and dynamism of local organisations of people with albinism and their work in partnership with the Government. She heard from some people with albinism that they felt there was a changing of mindsets towards them which helped with inclusion and acceptance. Civil society initiatives include mentorship programmes and the use of theatre and the creative arts to build awareness and correct misbeliefs.



*Ms. Ikponwosa Ero.*

“Although there is much work to be done in South Africa in eliminating human rights abuses against people with albinism, I am encouraged to see partnerships and cooperation being forged. I urge the Government and civil society to work together in the development of a national action plan that incorporates the measures adopted in the Ekurhuleni Declaration of 2013 and the Regional Action Plan on albinism,” Ero said at the end of her visit.

The Independent Expert will produce a full report in March 2020. 🌍

# Young people urged to participate in development plans

As part of the United Nations in South Africa's work in preparing its development plan, the UN Population Fund recently organized a one-day consultative workshop with youth from different walks of life. The plan, called the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, outlines its work and priorities which are aligned with the government's National Development Plan (NDP).

The objective of the workshop was to mobilize support from various partners and UN agencies around how best to work with youth towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The workshop kicked off with a theatrical drama skit by the UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel, who demonstrated young people's interpretation of the work of the UN in South Africa, highlighting development, sexual and reproductive health ad rights, conflict resolution, humanitarian work and poverty alleviation as key themes. The discussions centred on the needs, challenges and opportunities for youth and young people living with disabilities.

"Your voice is our voice," said the UN in South Africa Resident Coordinator, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, who spoke about the vital role of the youth in the country's economic and social development. Although policies can be drafted and strategies implemented, she emphasized, young people need to have self-determination and learn how to combat challenges in order to drive their own success.

Ms. Bekele-Thomas talked about the challenges she encountered as a young woman growing up in Ethiopia

during its years of political instability and encouraged the youth to be selfless and take initiatives to drive change, not just for themselves but for their families and communities.

Shoki Tshabalala, the Acting Director General at the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, said it was "important to strengthen collaboration with the UN, as the UN exposes the youth to international work and networking opportunities, which allows South Africa to be part of the global community". She reminded participants that South Africa has a long history of youth who led the country to the democracy it was enjoying today.

The Executive Director for Corporate Strategy and Planning at the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Juliet Tshoke shared suggestions on how best NYDA could restructure and evaluate the current programmes and policies to better serve youth. "Unemployment has become a crisis in our country and the department needs to implement programmes that motivate young people to be thinkers and get involved for social cohesion," she noted.

As part of the consultation, youth delegates on the panel raised concerns and issues affecting young people such as access to funding for young entrepreneurs, skills gap in the labor market and lack of mentorship opportunities. Others included the negative mentality towards agriculture and the stigma surrounding disabled people who are faced with the same challenges as other people but find it more difficult to receive basic services or voice their challenges.

The panelists called for policy changes that address the challenges they faced and urged for continued implementation of department's plans beyond the incumbent minister's term of office.

Young leaders called upon the government, in partnership with the UN to lead by example and shift from theoretical discussions to implementation in addressing people's needs. The recommendations included how the UN could effectively work with government and respond to the young people's challenges and tap into their full potential.

Beatrice Mutali, the UNFPA Representative for South Africa, reaffirmed the UN's commitment to consider the outcomes of the workshop and to make the necessary changes in implementing its recommendations and tracking progress. 🌍



# FAO urges the public to stick to healthy diets



The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) celebrated the 2019 World Food Day on 16 October with a call to the public to stick to healthy diets under the theme: “Our actions are our future. Healthy diets for a #zerohunger world”. At an event held in the Eastern Cape Province, FAO used the occasion to call for greater global commitment to realize Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 on achieving Zero Hunger.

Similar events were held in more than 150 countries across the world to raise awareness on the importance of achieving Zero Hunger, ensuring food security and nutritious diets for all and to take action for those who suffer from hunger and malnutrition.

Achieving Zero Hunger is not only about addressing hunger but also nourishing people while nurturing the planet. This requires action across various sectors to make healthy and sustainable diets accessible and affordable to everyone, and for people to start thinking about what they eat.

A healthy diet is one that meets the nutritional needs of individuals by providing sufficient, safe, nutritious and diverse foods to lead an active life and reduce the risk of disease. It includes, among others, fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds and whole grains, and foods that are low in fats (especially saturated fats), sugar and salt. Unfortunately, nutritious foods that constitute a healthy diet are not available or affordable for many people.

In recent decades, many people have dramatically changed their diets and eating habits as a result of globalization, urbanization and



*FAO Representative Francesco Pierrri and Minister Thoko Didiza with the farm manager at the Magwa Tea Estate.*

income growth. They have moved from seasonal, mainly plant-based and fibre-rich dishes, to diets that are high in refined starches, sugar, fats, salt, processed foods, meat and other animal-source products. Less time is spent preparing meals at home, and consumers, especially in urban areas, increasingly rely on supermarkets, fast food outlets, street food vendors and take-away restaurants.

A combination of unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles has sent obesity rates soaring, not only in developed countries, but also low-income countries, where hunger and obesity often co-exist. Globally, more than 670 million adults and 120 million girls and boys (5–19 years) are obese, and over 40 million children under five are overweight, while over 800 million people suffer from hunger.

An unhealthy diet is the leading risk factor death across the globe from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and certain cancers. Linked with one fifth of deaths worldwide,

unhealthy eating habits are also taking a toll on national health budgets costing up to US\$2 trillion per year.

In the way our food systems currently work, from agricultural production to processing and retailing, there is little space for fresh, locally produced foods as staple crops such as cereals take priority. Intensified food production, combined with climate change, is causing a rapid loss of biodiversity. Today only nine plant species account for 66% of total crop production even though throughout history, more than 6,000 species have been cultivated for food. A diverse variety of crops is crucial for providing healthy diets and safeguarding the environment.

Obesity and other forms of malnutrition affect nearly one in three people. Projections indicate that the number will be one in two by 2025. The good news is that affordable solutions exist to reduce all forms of malnutrition, but they require greater global commitment and action. 🌍

# SA to adopt landmark National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security



Key stakeholders at the validation of the draft National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Photo: Katlholo Maifadi/DIRCO.

South Africa is set to become the 25th country in Africa to adopt a national action plan for women, peace and security. The National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security convened a multi-stakeholder workshop to validate the Draft National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019 in Pretoria.

“This is an important landmark in the search for peace,” said Minister for International Relations and Co-operation Naledi Pandor and she indicated that South Africa will use its presidency of the UN Security Council in October 2019 to put forward a resolution on women, peace and security. She said South Africa was well situated to provide much needed leadership on women, peace and security and to strategically influence the implementation of the agenda in Africa and globally – it could champion these issues in the UN Security Council and as the AU chairperson in 2020.

UN resident co-ordinator Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas said South Africa had a lot to offer UN member states with its experience in peace-building but added that work needed to be done to drastically reduce the high-levels of gender-based violence and the NAP needed to lead to relevant solutions.

Mr Paal Bjørnstad from the Embassy of Norway which has funded the development of the National Action Plan

(NAP) agreed that it was difficult to think of a country better suited than South Africa to preside over the UN Security Council in October as countries had a lot to learn from the peaceful transition to democracy that South Africa had experienced and the NAP validation further cemented South Africa’s role in the search for peace globally.

Yasmin Sooka, head of the Foundation for Human Rights, highlighted the close cooperation between government and civil society in developing the National Action Plan and called for robust accountability mechanisms to ensure proper implementation of the plan.

“If any NAP is to be successful it must ensure that it sets out who ultimately is responsible for the implementation. It should also encapsulate the mechanism through which we can hold both government and civil society accountable and it also needs to ensure that there is space for government’s multilateral and regional institutions and civil society to work together. But above all it requires political will and financial resources to ensure its implementation,” Sooka said.

As part of its programme on ending violence against women and girls, UN Women SAMCO supports countries to draft and adopt their National Action Plans on Peace and Security. In June 2019 Namibia successfully launched its NAP and in 2018 the SADC regional NAP was adopted. 🌍

# A boost to refugees' access to education opportunities



In an effort to raise awareness in support of access to education for refugee youth across Africa, the Women's Business Network for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, hosted an inaugural brunch Women to Women in August in Johannesburg in honour of the National Women's Month.

Kristin Davis, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and American actress best known for her role in *Sex and the City*, was the keynote speaker for the event. "The Women's Business Network for UNHCR is a wonderful example of how we can support the journeys of people who have been forced to flee. Bringing to attention the needs of refugee girls and women has never been more important and giving them a chance in life through education is vital in helping them rebuild their lives," said Ms. Davis.

Leanne Manas, the UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and award-winning TV and Radio presenter, served as the Master of Ceremonies for the inaugural brunch which also included a musical performance by South African

singer, Lira. Tresor Mpauni, a refugee performer from Malawi, performed his slam poetry and two young refugee female students living in South Africa shared their personal journeys fleeing conflict and the struggles they both faced in starting anew.

Edith Venter, South African philanthropist and event organizer served as the Chair of the network and is the fundraiser's key organizer. "The Women's Business Network for UNHCR was convened very recently and brings together women business and community leaders, and leading women entrepreneurs in South Africa committed to improving the lives of those forced to flee violence, conflict or persecution in the continent," said Ms. Venter.

The brunch event also raised over R320,000 (US\$22,900) through donations and a charity auction. Auction items included a six-night stay at Fairmont hotels across Kenya, Swarovski crystal jewelry sets, and a purse worn from Kristin Davis's character, Charlotte, from the *Sex and the City* show.



*Kristin Davis, American actress.  
Photo: © UNHCR/Kaimara.*

"We applaud the efforts of the Women's Business Network for UNHCR for raising awareness and funds for the over 25 million forcibly displaced people across Africa," said Needa Jehu-Hoyah, head of UNHCR Private Sector Partnerships for Africa. "UNHCR greatly appreciates and welcomes private sector engagement to support people forced to flee to not only survive their harrowing journeys but also provide the tools and support to become contributing members of their host communities," she added.

During her visit to South Africa, Ms. Davis met with young women refugees, who through the support of UNHCR, its donor countries and implementing partners, have received scholarships to attend university. "It has been truly wonderful meeting these young women who have such spirit and strength to overcome their circumstances and persevere for a better future for themselves and their families. Meeting these refugee students has left me inspired," said Davis. 🌍



*Leanne Manas, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador moderates a panel discussion.*

# Were you really raped, or did you just not get paid?

“Women who use drugs are prejudged to be incapable of being mothers, unfaithful as partners, and unworthy of redemption. They are rendered invisible, and their role as both participants and victims of drug trafficking and drug use is underestimated and understudied,” according to a new report by the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

South Africa has extremely high levels of sexual violence and sexual rights violations against women. Women who use drugs face further challenges including stigmatisation from service providers and health care providers, leading to limited access to key health services, says the report titled: *Were you really raped, or did you just not get paid? A Needs Assessment of Women Who Use Drugs in Four Cities in South Africa.*

In 2018, UNODC supported a series of interactive consultations with women who use drugs, including women who inject drugs, in four cities in South Africa: Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg with the aim to identify their needs and challenges or barriers to access health services and propose solutions to removing such barriers. About 100 women who use and inject drugs participated in these consultations.

One of the key findings was the levels of violence and aggression experienced by these women at the hands of law enforcement officers. This includes security raids and forced removals, as well as sexual favours required by law enforcement agencies. Issues related to continuity of care have also been raised, where medical treatment is interrupted at the

time of arrest and when belongings are confiscated, especially for street-dwelling female drug users.

Due to these challenges of violence and extortion, these women have little or no access to justice and recourse. This further leads to gaps in service delivery in their attempts to access health care, psychosocial support and safe spaces.

The report provides some solutions as described by the community members that formed part of the needs assessment. These include access to sanitary pads, toiletries and clothing for women who use drugs. They also require access to rehabilitation and healthcare institutions and educational awareness on harm reduction due to their substance abuse.

While the report brought into sharp focus the challenges many of these women face, it also highlighted solutions to these challenges to ensure that women who use drugs are provided with support and the necessary care to self-empowerment. 🌍

## Energizing young leaders to be productive citizens

**F**ourteen delegates from the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) Young Leadership Conference recently attended an information session at the South Africa country office of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to learn more about the agency's work in the country.

The session was part of a one-week conference that looked at transformative leadership as part of efforts to change or improve government policies, enhance standards of living and provide more inclusive citizen participation in shaping reforms. Delegates were split into groups to research different issues such as peace, security, justice and education and were given an opportunity to go on site visits to see how various organizations address these issues.

UNICEF South Africa Communications Specialist Sudeshan Reddy introduced the agency's three main priorities and spoke about the role young leaders could play in assisting UNICEF address these priorities. Mr. Reddy quoted statistics from a report which found that more than “84% of millennials want to make the world a better place”.

The delegates were briefed on UNICEF's work, followed by discussions with UNICEF South Africa Youth Advocate Diya Chopra and Graphic Designer Kgaugelo Mojapelo on a diverse range of issues. These included the role that social media and youth leaders could play in raising awareness of UNICEF priorities. The aim of the leadership conference was to come up with a Declaration

of recommendations on how to achieve transformative leadership. The Declaration will be made available to all the relevant stakeholders, including the government and UN agencies. UNICEF intends to work closely with the young leaders to make their recommendations a reality. Many of the young leaders at the conference were part of the Generation Unlimited, a global partnership that prepares youth to become productive and engaged citizens. It connects high school education and training to employment and entrepreneurship, empowering every young person to thrive in the world of work. It also gives young people an opportunity to showcase their ideas and work with UNICEF and governments to find sustainable solutions to issues affecting youth. 🌍

# Edward K. Ndopu: Winner of the inaugural UN in South Africa Partnership Award



*Edward K. Ndopu (Centre) with representative of the UN and Diplomatic Corp at the Award Ceremony.*

South African activist, Edward K. Ndopu, was accorded the winner of the inaugural 2019 United Nations in South Africa Partnership Award on Human Rights Day “in recognition of his outstanding contribution to human rights advocacy”. The award ceremony, which took place at a seminar held in Pretoria on the importance of multilateralism, was jointly organized by the UN and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

Speaking at the ceremony, the head of the UN in SA, Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, paid tribute to Mr. Ndopu’s dedication and commitment to humanitarian issues and human rights. Mr. Ndopu, a world-renowned activist, was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy when he was two years old and doctors gave him only five years to live. He has since defied all the odds staked against him and has successfully become a global beacon of hope and possibility for people with disabilities. He is currently one of the UN Secretary-General’s Advocate on Sustainable Development Goals and has also advised the World Economic Forum, UN Women and Amnesty International.

Mr. Ndopu is currently planning to deliver a televised address to the UN from Space, in an effort to inspire greater ambition around the SDGs. This will make him the first physically disabled person to travel into space. In his

brief acceptance speech, Mr. Ndopu told the gathering that, “This [the award] is not just a personal achievement for me. This is a symbolic victory for 1.3 billion people with disabilities around the world.”

The UN in SA Partnership Award will be presented annually on UN Day by the UN agencies to honour an individual or an institution in recognition of its outstanding contributions to human rights advocacy.

Ms. Bekele-Thomas commended DIRCO for hosting the event and the demonstrating the department’s commitment “to constructive conversation aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations in the country and beyond. We are very grateful for this support from a key member state of the United Nations.”

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms. Candith Mashego-Dlamini gave the keynote address in which she said she was “pleased with the ongoing engagement between government departments and the United Nations Development System” on their collaboration on the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. “The framework,” the deputy minister said, “once finalized, will outline the areas in which the UN could provide support for South Africa’s development priorities.”



# ICPD 25 +UNFPA @50 Launch Eastern Cape Province: Unfinished business rights and choices for all

UNFPA South Africa through the Youth Advisory Panel Eastern Cape in partnership with EC AIDS Council, Restless Development, Provincial Population Unit and the Office of the Member of Executive Council (MEC) for Social Development commemorated the ICPD25+UNFPA@50 as part of the conversations leading to Road to Nairobi under the theme “Unfinished business rights and choices for all”.

The commemoration took place on the 27th August 2019 in Regent Hotel East London with attendance of +130 participants representing various youth targeted Civil society organisations, Provincial AIDS Council Chairperson of Civil Society Sector, ECSECC, Institutions of higher Learning, Lilitha Nursing College, HEAIDS, etc. This session contributes to the current series of global discussions on #ICPD25, as part of the lead-up to The Nairobi Summit that will be held in Kenya, on 13-15 November 2019.

UNFPA disseminated a provincial position paper on Demographic Dividend (DD) and young people led a vibrant conversation around the four pillars of demographic dividend, young people also came up with recommendations on each pillar of the DD. The conversation offered an inclusive platform to support regional, national and local commitments of the ICPD Programme of Action within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Youth serving organisations, youth leaders, civil society partners, and Parliamentarians conversed on the progress and challenges related to the #ICPD25 agenda. This conversation is one of the many conversations that UNFPA South Africa is facilitating with young people, political leaders, Government and Civil Society ahead of the Nairobi Summit.

As an outcome of the session the MEC for Social Development committed to using the provincial DD report presented to resuscitate the department provincial leadership of the social sector to ensure that planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of all social sector departments is based on the recommendations as outlined in the provincial DD position paper.



*Siphokazi Mani-Lusithi, Member of MEC for Social Development.*



*Participants at the ICPD25 +UNFPA @50 Launch Eastern Cape Province: Unfinished business rights and choices for all.*

# UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Women's Month Overview

## Overview of Women's Month



South Africa commemorates Women's Month in August as a tribute to the more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 to hand over 100 000 signatures in protest of the extension of

Pass Laws to women. They sought to end discrimination, the secondary status they had been delegated to and restriction to their freedom of movement. This form of organising and determination to end injustice has inspired generations to come in South Africa, and across the globe. Women's Month is a tribute to the women of 1956 and the pioneers of the Women's Movement in South Africa dating back to 1913, who were integral to the struggle for democratic freedom. Women's Month also celebrates the achievements of women since the dawn of democracy, reflects on persistent challenges to attain gender equality and women's empowerment and considers strategies that will advance women in society. In 2019 Women's Month celebrations and reflections focused on the progress made on gender equality and women's empowerment since South Africa became a democracy 25 years ago. *Photo: Government ZA.*

## Official Women's Month Launch – 31 July



UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO), in collaboration with the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, officially launched the 2019 Women's Month Programme on 31

July under the theme: "25 Years of Democracy: Growing South Africa Together for Women's Emancipation". Hon

Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities called on all government departments to have results-driven programmes that are impactful and responsive towards women's needs and participation and highlighted the lack of support for women living with disabilities as one of the issues that need urgent action. Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas, the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in South Africa, commended the South African government for reaching gender parity in the executive but urged for concerted action to address issues affecting women. Anne Githuku-Shongwe, the Representative of UN Women SAMCO focused on discriminatory practices and laws that continue to hold women back 25 years after democracy and highlighted the need to identify any discriminatory laws against women in South Africa and to take steps to harmonize the laws to address the various issues affecting women. *Photo: UNIC.*

## Gertrude Shope Dialogue – 5-8 August



Annually, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) hosts the Gertrude Shope Dialogue Forum and Capacity- Building Programme for women mediators and peace builders to discuss and share experiences on peace- and security- related issues. This year's Dialogue, from 5-8 August, was held under the theme, "25 Years of Democracy – Growing South Africa Together for Women's Emancipation". Among many objectives, this year's Dialogue's sought to reflect on the achievements and challenges in order to develop action plans in line with the aspirations of the United Nations Security Council's resolutions; identifying benefits that can be attained through collaboration between states and non-state sectors; and determining the required infrastructure to deal with contemporary issues in women, peace and security. UN Women works with DIRCO to train women mediators. *Photo: DIRCO.*

## UNISA SAWID UN Women, Women's Month Celebratory Dialogue – 7 August



UNISA (University of South Africa) in partnership with South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) and UN Women SAMCO held a celebratory dialogue to mark women's month. Themed *Supporting Women Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Economic Development*, the dialogue explored the role of women in the country's economy focusing on Early Childhood Development, Agriculture and Food Security, and Waste Management. Participants including public and private sector representatives, civil society, academia and development partners considered how women can mobilise knowledge, technology, expertise, and funding from governmental, non-governmental, and corporate institutions to create sustainable income-generation opportunities in these sectors.

Prof Mandla Makhanya, Unisa's Principal and Vice-Chancellor said women collectives that were organised and well-structured could unleash Africa's entrepreneurial potential and positively change the fortunes of the continent. Deputy Minister in the Presidency Thembi Siweya defined access to land by women as a critical requirement for women's enterprises to thrive whilst UN Women SAMCO Representative Anne Githuku-Shongwe called for the recognition of unpaid care work and its impact on the economic participation and opportunities for women. Nolitha Fakude, the incoming chair of Anglo-American South Africa's management board and keynote speaker, noted the economic gaps and inequalities experienced by women in and outside the boardroom and called for leaders to create an enabling environment for women to be well represented in leadership roles. *Photos (1&3) UN Women/Otae Mkandawire; Photo 2 UNISA/Lesego Ravhudzulo.*

## Women in Transport Empowerment Entrepreneurs Summit – 8 August

UN Women has partnered with the Transport Education Training Authority (TETA) to provide a platform for women-owned businesses (WOB) to explore business opportunities in the transport sector. Provincial Summits are being held through the country as part of the outcomes of the 2017 TETA Inaugural Women in Transport Leadership Summit. UN Women has identified the transport sector as a strategic sector for WOB based on the procurement spend by Government and the corporate sector. At the summit, UN Women was part of the panel that focused on how women



can access this sector through conducive procurement policies. UN Women will convene Women in Transport Summits in Eastern Cape, North West and Limpopo. The summits have so far reached about 760 women entrepreneurs. *Photo: UN Women/Veronica Vosloo.*

## #AdvanceUs Beijing+25, South African Youth Dialogue on Women and Girls – 9 August



UN Women, Sasol and Born to Succeed Women a South African based women and girls development agency is hosting a National Dialogue on Women's day, 9 August, on the advancement of women and girls. The national dialogue was held in preparation for the Regional level review that took place from 12 - 14 August in Abidjan. UNFPA Representative Beatrice Mutali and Vice President of Sasol Applications and Enterprise Resource Planning Services Lungile Mgingqi provided keynote remarks. Other speakers included Luyolo Mphithi who is one of the youngest Members of Parliament, Ayanda Thabethe and Tumi Voster well known media personalities, Lebogang Masango UNICEF Volunteer Advocate, Boni Dlamini from the Cell C take a girl child, and Dr. Shakira Chanoora who is a member of the African Union Youth Advisory Council. The dialogue covered the 12 critical areas of progress of the Beijing Declaration such as participation of women in the economy, the human rights of women and gender-based violence. *Photos: Born to Succeed.*

## Engen Pitch and Polish - Pitching workshop for women-owned businesses and women entrepreneurs – 10 August



Engen in partnership with Raizcorp and UN Women hosted a Pitch and Polish event for more than 350 women-owned businesses (WOB) from Gauteng province to provide experiential learning on pitching business ideas to investors/funders. Three WOB won prizes after pitching to a panel of judges which included UN Women, Engen and RaizCorp. One of the winners a young female farmer who works

in vertical farming will be given opportunities within the agricultural activities being undertaken by UN Women.

*Photo: UN Women/Siya Leshebane.*

## Launch of UN Women and Vodacom Partnership on ICT in agriculture for women farmers – 20 August



The Vodacom Foundation officially launched its partnership with UN Women and South African Women in Farming, following a yearlong pilot phase in four provinces. The programme seeks to bridge the digital and information gap by equipping women farmers with the digital skills and knowledge to run their businesses better. Through the pilot, the programme managed to empower 800 women small-holder farmers in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Eastern Cape, with critical digital skills training. Some women farmers in attendance gave testimonies on how the training has enabled them to have email accounts, sell their produce via social media, detect weather patterns for harvesting and organise meetings through WhatsApp groups. The programme will now be rolled out countrywide for women farmers. The training will enable the women farmers to use the Vodacom Digifarm app - a cloud-based web and mobile software solution that links enterprises to smallholder farmers through the transfer of industry-related information and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. The app equips farmers to make better decisions, improve efficiencies, and subsequently improve produce.

*Photo: Vodacom.*

## UN Women and Dove Master Class and South Africa Unstereotype Alliance National Chapter announcement at Loeries Creative Week 2019 - 22-23 August



Dove and UN Women held a joint Masterclass on removing gender-based stereotypes in all media and advertising content at the annual Loeries Creative Week for Africa and Middle East. The Masterclass attracted more than 100 participants from the advertising and creative industry and private sector who were keen to support the Unstereotype Alliance (UA). Speakers were Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative, Sphelele Mjadu, Unilever Personal Care Senior Public Relations Manager for Africa, Glamour Magazine SA Editor, Asanda Sizani, model, Elle-Rose and senior copywriter at FCB, Khanyi Mpumlwana. Azania Mosaka moderated the session. At the Loeries Creative Week Seminar, Facebook Africa and Google South Africa announced their membership to the UA SA Chapter. Many creatives offered to use their art and content to address issues of GBV during the 16 days of activism and most companies expressed strong interest in joining UA SA. A UA national chapter with a strong private sector presence will be a good case study on how the creative industry can contribute to addressing issues of gender equality, women's empowerment and gender-based violence in the country. *Photo: UN Women/Otae Mkandawire.*

## Facebook #SheMeansBusiness South Africa Launch - 29 August



On 29 August Facebook launched #SheMeansBusiness in South Africa, an initiative designed to inspire, empower and train female entrepreneurs to build, grow and start their own businesses. Working in partnership with Siyafunda CTC, the programme will offer practical training in digital and business skills for female business owners. Facebook will also collaborate with UN Women, to train a network of female business owners and entrepreneurs that need support in South Africa. Building the digital

capacity of women entrepreneurs through Facebook's digital marketing modules, is part of UN Women's Flagship initiative Stimulating Equal Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs. The trainings will also cover areas such as business development, operations management, financial management and leadership. #SheMeansBusiness will begin to rollout in September running until the end of the year, across all nine provinces aiming to train 4000 women.

*Photo: Wired to the Web/Nafisa Akabor.*

## Step it Up for Gender Equality in SA Media Conference – 29 August



UN Women SAMCO and GIZ hosted the Step it Up for Gender Equality in SA Media Conference in Johannesburg. The event brought public and private media houses, production houses, government and civil society together to find solutions to the issues of gender equality, sexual harassment and abuse within the media and creative industries, representation and stereotyping in media as well as coverage of gender equality issues. The conference saw leading journalists and media professionals such as Mahlatse Gallens (EWN editor), Gugulethu Mhlungu (deputy editor of Bona magazine), Palesa Letlaka (filmmaker and media specialist) and many others take the stage to discuss inclusive, unsteretyped, and gender equal representation.

The 2019 Gender and Media Baseline Study conducted by Genderlinks revealed that two thirds of all broadcast entertainment media in South Africa contains gender stereotypes that perpetuate gender discrimination. The conference worked to create a partnership between media houses, production houses, government and civil society to achieve gender equality in the media and creative industries.

## Master Class for women organic farmers in KwaZulu-Natal - 30 August

UN Women was invited by the Dr John Langalibalele Dube Institute (JLD Institute) to give a Master Class lecture for women organic farmers on climate smart practices, entrepreneurship and practical industry knowledge. The women farmers are beneficiaries of the institute's women farmers training programme. The JLD Institute, an institute of the University of KwaZulu Natal has a special focus on land research, and community development programmes



which includes skills and capacity development particularly for women and youth in rural areas to reduce unemployment and inequality. To date the institute has trained more than 200 rural women farmers in KwaZulu Natal. UN Women seeks to incorporate aspects of the JLD training model into its work with women farmers such as climate smart agriculture practices, financial and digital literacy training.

*Photo: JLD Institute.*

## Women in Judiciary Dialogue – 31 August



To close Women's Month, the department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, in partnership with UNODC and UN Women, hosted a Women in Judiciary Dialogue to explore how the legal system can be an enabler for gender equality. The event brought together Court Presidents, Judges, Magistrates, the Commission for Gender Equality, Wits Law Clinic, Legal Aid, SA Chapter: International Association of Women Judges (SAC-IAWJ), and UN Women, amongst other organisations. Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize said Gender-based Violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment; cohabitation and maintenance; widows and deceased estates, and child justice remain areas of concern for gender equality where either application, interpretation of the law, or disharmony in laws results in gender injustices taking place. UN Women SA Multi Country Office Representative, Ms Anne Githuku-Shongwe said that South Africa's laws were mostly inclusive but there still exists laws that discriminate on the grounds of gender. She spoke of land ownership and how cultural practises still prevented women from owning land – one of 39 countries around the world. 🌍

## WHO Representative for South Africa



The World Health Organization (WHO) has appointed Dr. Owen Laws Kaluwa as its new Resident Representative in South Africa. Prior to his appointment, Dr Kaluwa was WHO Representative in the countries of Ghana and Swaziland and Regional Adviser for HIV/AIDS for the Africa Region. Dr. Kaluwa joined the WHO Regional Office for Africa in 2002 as a Regional Advisor for HIV Programme Development, Monitoring and Evaluation. During this period, Dr. Kaluwa was instrumental in strengthening the health sector response to HIV/AIDS and boosting up anti-retroviral treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS in countries in the Africa Region.

Dr. Kaluwa also worked in Botswana as WHO Medical Officer for HIV/AIDS, providing technical support and guidance to increase medical treatment. Before joining WHO, he worked in his home country of Malawi as the Head of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV/AIDS Programmes in the Ministry of Health as the National Coordinator of HIV/AIDS Strategic Planning and also as the Programme Director of the National AIDS Commission.

Dr. Kaluwa is a graduate of the Free University of Berlin in Germany where he specialized in epidemiology and preventive medicine. He has more than 20 years of experience in epidemiological surveillance, strategic planning, programme development and management, as well as monitoring and evaluation in health. He has a passion for universal health coverage and equitable access to health services. 🌍

## Gabriel Dava appointed as the new Deputy Resident Representative



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has appointed Gabriel Dava as its new Deputy Resident Representative in South Africa. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Dava was the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Guinea-Bissau, where he was responsible for programme management.

Previously, he was the head of the Poverty Reduction, Gender and HIV and AIDS Unit in the UNDP office in Mozambique. Before joining UNDP, Mr. Dava worked with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) office in Mozambique, initially as the Chief Economist (1999-2001) and then as the Director of the Programme Support Unit (2002-2009). Between 1996 and 1999, Mr. Dava served as the Senior Social Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Planning and Finance in Mozambique, contracted by the World Bank where he played a key role in conducting Mozambique's first National Poverty Assessment and the respective Poverty Reduction Strategy formulation. He also contributed to the design of the National Food Security Strategy.

Mr. Dava worked for the Government of Mozambique (1991-1996) as the National Director of Social Action at the Ministry of Women and Social Action, where he was responsible for coordinating and implementing national social policies. He holds a Masters degree in Development Finance and Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration. 🌍

# Dealing with Mental Health: “Let’s take care of ourselves”



*Sindiswa Mathiso, UN in South Africa Wellness Coordinator.*

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”. Mental health means having a healthy state of mind, healthy thoughts and healthy emotions. We see mental health as a feeling of peace with the world and with oneself. We believe mental health is a state of awareness about your mental state—to a level where you are capable of not only knowing that you need help when you need it, but also capable of reaching out for it. If this state is maintained, we believe a person is mentally healthy.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and behave. It also helps determine how we relate to others and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Mental health problems are real, and we need to make sure we deal with a lot of myths and stigma around it. Many times, people do not want to talk about their mental health problems because either we judge or gossip about them. Talking about your mental health problems does not mean you are weak, it just means you are taking good care of yourself and your loved ones. If we think we will be able to deal with the myths and stigma around it, we need to start looking at mental health illness as any other illness like headache, tooth ache, stomach ache etc.

As UN staff members, family members and community members, we need to provide a listening ear to our loved ones when they start opening up to us. The times we live

in have put so much of pressure on us, be it financially, health wise, relationships, parenting etc. As colleagues, community members, family members, we owe it to ourselves to make life easy for those suffering from mental health challenges. We cannot afford to be ignorant when many people suffer in silence because they fear how we will treat them. In this new year, we must make it our goal to be each one another’s keeper.

As employees, we suffer from job burnout, family problems, health problems, etc. if we cannot talk to each other about these issues, where will we go?

It is very important that we look for **early warning signs**: Some of the signs are as follows:

- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Withdrawing from others and usual activities
- Having low or no energy (hence the emphasis on physical exercise)
- Constantly staying away from work
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling worried, confused, forgetful, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with colleagues, friends or family
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to do your daily routines like bathing, taking care of house, your kids or getting to work
- Feeling like nothing matters
- Eating or sleeping too much or too little

Coping with mental health challenges differ from person to person. Some of the coping mechanisms are as follows:

- Try to eat healthy meals: It boosts your energy. Unhealthy food puts a huge amount of strain on the human digestive system.
- Get some exercise:(Let’s try to do away with the excuse of not having time for this one, this is good for our health.
- Get enough sleep: It helps with better concentration and productivity.
- Making time to do things you enjoy will help you keep your stress levels in check.
- Be aware of your emotions: If we live in denial of our emotions, it will take longer to take care of them, because once we recognize what we are feeling, we can deal with it or whatever is causing it.
- Seek professional help: This is essential for your long term well- being.
- Talk to friends, colleagues and relatives: Find someone you trust. This extra support could make a huge difference. 🌈

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