

InFocus



A magazine of the UN in South Africa

Vol 1, Issue No. 3, October 2018



PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVES FOR ALL

South Africa hosts the 2018 All Africa UN Games

Making the South African economy work for women: What will it take?

Lego: adding colour to children's playtime

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Front and back cover photos:

UN staff at the 2018 All Africa UN Games in South Africa.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome to our third edition of *InFocus*, a magazine of the United Nations system in South Africa. You will find, in this issue, a fascinating interview with Herve de Lys, the former UNICEF's Representative in South Africa, who completed his tour of duty in August. In the interview, Mr. de Lys discusses his experience in South Africa, noting: "After nearly five years in this beautiful country, I have learned that one should not make judgements based on one's initial reaction, that it is important to ask questions, build trust and understand how the history of this country has shaped every individual and every community because apartheid in its form was unique to South Africa."

A staff from UNHCR, the refugee agency, visits Eastern Cape Province where the agency has teamed up with the Eastern Cape Refugee Centre to obtain a better understanding of the socio-economic conditions faced by the communities in which refugees establish their businesses. The author gives insights into how the partnership is trying to identify the key social challenges refugees face so that critical interventions of benefit to both refugee and host communities could be implemented with the ultimate goal of promoting peaceful co-existence.

Also in this issue, the UN in South Africa hosted the first ever All Africa UN Games in Mpumalanga Province that brought together three UN Resident Coordinators and hundreds of UN staff from across Africa who competed in 12 sports disciplines. The tournament was won by Zimbabwe, with South Africa and Kenya finishing second and third respectively. Our readers will also find feature stories on how UNICEF is using Lego as an educational tool among school children and the progress South Africa is making in ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic;

These and many other stories in the current issue sums up some of the valuable contributions the UN is making towards South Africa's development, working in partnership with the government, the private sector and the civil society.

Please feel free to send us your feedback on this and future issues.



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UNHCR Interventions gaining ground in South Africa's Eastern Cape communities

By Pumla Rulashe

UNHCR funded programme provides concrete support towards integration of refugees into local communities in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa



Noxolo Mfanyana, Field Advocate (left) with the Eastern Cape Refugee Centre talks to Noluthando Mkoko, Patroller and Peace Builder (right) about developments in KwaZakhele Township.
© UNHCR/Pumla Rulashe

Thirty-six-year-old Somali refugee, Adan Ibrahim Ali, smiles warmly as Noxolo Mfanyana walks into the warehouse he manages. She is one of several field advocates, with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s partner organization, the Eastern Cape Refugee Centre (ECRC), responsible for promoting social cohesion between refugees and their South African hosts in over 10 communities across the Eastern Cape Province.

She is on her weekly visit to Korsten, a suburb populated by Somali and Ethiopian refugees. Korsten is one of the locations where refugees have settled and established flourishing businesses, servicing residents across a vast radius in Port Elizabeth.

Since his arrival in South Africa in late 2009, Ali's hard work and business acumen have helped put the warehouse on sound footing, generating a steady profit and a healthy return on his investment in the enterprise.

Unfortunately, it had also made him the easy target of criminals, hiding in the

shadows, impatiently waiting to part him from his earnings.

"It has always been an open secret that Somali and Ethiopian refugees in particular, are the criminals' ATM," he chuckles wryly.

Ali attributes this level of harassment to their inability to open bank accounts which over the years, has made them vulnerable to victimization and crime. As a result, many refugees have suffered life-altering injury, loss of livelihoods or even loss of life.

Similarly, South Africa's banking institutions, hit by wave after wave of fraudulent activities viewed refugees and other foreign nationals with suspicion and mistrust, despite government issued permits and identity documents regularizing their status in the country.

For years, refugees remained in a precarious position, fearful and frustrated.

"We had no choice but to continue keeping money hidden on our persons,

in our rooms or in our shops which only perpetuated the cycle of violence against us," says Ali.

The vulnerability of refugee traders in communities that fed off rumours, stereotyping and deliberate misinformation, fomented tensions, periodically leading to violence, vandalism and the looting of their businesses.

"For UNHCR," says Madalena Hogg, Senior Protection Officer the continued exposure of refugees to this kind of crime, has been one of our most critical concerns. The situation had to be dealt with urgently."

UNHCR established a partnership with ECRC to obtain a better understanding of the socio-economic conditions faced by the communities in which refugees establish their businesses and also to identify the key social challenges they face so that critical interventions of benefit to both refugee and host communities are implemented with the ultimate goal of promoting peaceful co-existence.

After successive meetings with key stakeholders including the South African Police Services (SAPS), relevant government ministries such as the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), civil society organizations and refugees in the identified locations, engaging the province's banking institutions with extending their services to refugees was critical.

Several meetings later, Standard Bank a financial institution that has operated in South Africa since 1862, responded positively to the ECRC's overtures.

Interestingly, when ECRC contacted the bank for assistance, it too had been going through an exercise to improve its services and relationship with the public to be more relevant and user-friendly.

“We realized that to continue being the bank of choice for post 1994 South Africa, we had to become more responsive to and cognizant of the demographics of the banking market landscape,” says Lesley Dilley, Team Leader: Pro-Active Sales at Standard Bank.

“Standard Bank became an absolute god send,” says Sweetness Pullen, Director of ECRC, “because we had found a financial institution to help us help refugees.”

With the assisted guidance of relevant refugee stakeholders including the Department of Home Affairs, the SAPS, ECRC and refugees, Standard Bank began opening personal and business banking accounts for refugees, in June 2018.

“While they have to have valid permits issued and verified with the DHA for both personal and business accounts,” explains Dilley, “their businesses also have to be FICA compliant.” The Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA) 38 of 2001 was introduced to fight financial crime, such as money laundering, tax evasion, and terrorist financing activities.

With the growing trend by criminals to waylay and drive off with refugee vehicles laden with goods and items to stock their businesses, Standard Bank also offers business insurance against

the theft or loss of goods in transit as well as resulting from vandalism and looting.

“After an assessment by a consultant of the total expenses of a refugees’ shop items and stock, Standard Bank, advises the client on the amount of insurance, which is paid for on a monthly basis by the business owner.

“All a client has to do if their store is robbed, is to report it to the SAPS after which, they come to the bank with a case number. This triggers our internal systems which ensure that the client receives assistance, based on a number of variables that are a part of the service relating to business banking and insurance.”

“Increasingly,” says Pullen, “more and more refugee business owners including women, are approaching Standard Bank for their services.”

ECRC’s intervention to achieve socially cohesive communities hasn’t stopped here. They are also responding to community concerns relating to accusations against refugees in respect of the sale of expired products and food items.

Through its stakeholder, the Municipal Offices of Public Health, the ECRC has assisted refugee store owners to identify goods and food items not suitable for

human consumption. The ECRC has also ensured that several refugee businesses are registered with the South African Revenue Services (SARS) in order to be tax compliant. Many of them now display framed SARS certificates in their shops.

Recently, the ECRC with the support of UNHCR, launched a studio discussion programme on community radio called, Who is my Neighbour?. Its aim is to engage communities on the rights and obligations of refugees.

Refugees in the communities are also part of an interactive WhatsApp Messenger group that shares important, life-saving information between the police, DHA, ECRC and relevant civil society organizations in a timely manner.

Refugees also provide support to Patrol and Peace Builders, who with the support of the SAPS and Community Policing Forums, ensure that they too are protected.

Refugees have also increased their participation in community social events, attending funerals, providing much needed sponsorship for sports activities and supporting soup kitchens for the vulnerable and the indigent.

“This is all been done on the principal that gives the word ‘community’ its meaning,” says Pullen. “It is about constant interaction, based on respect, trust, support and mutual dependence on each other.”

“Many problems at community level have home grown solutions and what is happening in Port Elizabeth is testament to this,” says Pullen. “Even the SAPS has called these initiatives, ‘crime reducing measures.’”

Ali, couldn’t be happier.

“From constant fear and frustration, I can honestly say that my life and that of many refugees is getting better. I feel like a member of the community with the ability to truly exercise my rights and obligations in an environment that treats me as an equal.”

“I really enjoy my life now.” 🌈



Adan Ibrahim Ali in his warehouse in the Eastern Cape. © UNHCR/Pumla Rulashe

UN Women Making the South African economy work for women: What will it take?

By Otae Mkandawire



Credit: UN Women/Otae Mkandawire

Women business leaders and entrepreneurs with (front row L-R): Nozipho January-Bardill (UN Global Compact), Wendy Lucas Bull (Chair of Absa Group), Trudi Makhaya (Presidential Economic Advisor), Nardos Bekele Thomas (UN South Africa Resident Coordinator), Phumzile Langeni (Presidential Special Envoy on Investment), and Anne Githuku-Shongwe (UN Women Country Representative).

In May this year, women business leaders, women associations and entrepreneurs as well as social and economic experts gathered in Johannesburg for a high-level dialogue to explore strategies to make the South African economy work for women and to advance gender equality and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hosted by UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO) and Motseng Investment Holdings, the event was also used as an opportunity to engage with the recently appointed Presidential Economic Advisor, Trudi Makhaya and the Presidential Special Envoy on Investment, Phumzile Langeni, who is also the Executive Chairperson of the Afropulse Group.

Aside from advising the president on economic policy decisions, Ms. Makhaya will oversee a drive to attract \$100 billion over a five-year period in new investments in South Africa by a group of new investment envoys. These envoys include Ms. Langeni, former Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, former Deputy Finance Minister Mcebisi Jonas, and the Chairperson of Liberty Group, Jacko Maree.

The high-level dialogue on gender issues forms part of on-going advocacy initiatives linked to UN Women's flagship programme on "Stimulating Equal Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs through Affirmative Procurement, Investment and Supply Chain Policies". The programme seeks to improve women's access to public and private procurement of goods and services and link women to the value chain of opportunities in key sectors such as agriculture, energy, and infrastructure. In South Africa, expenditure on public procurement averages R635 billion (\$45.4 billion) annually, and of that women only access about 57 billion (\$4 billion) or 9%.

In her opening remarks, UN Women SAMCO Representative Anne Githuku-Shongwe posed a critical question: "What would the economy look like if it really worked for women?" She suggested dismantling negative norms and stereotypes that lead to discrimination and inequality as a starting point.

"Patriarchy holds us back and patriarchy defines the macro-economic framework of our countries—the entire framework is designed as if women don't exist," she told

“A women-centred economy would be human centred. Our economy is focused on a few sectors and a few models, so it’s important to open it up,” she noted. “How do we create space for diverse models and create space for black people and for black women? Have we created space for cooperatives? When we don’t have an alternative, we think only about growth and everything else falls away.”

the high-level gathering. Ms. Githuku-Shongwe called for investments that explicitly benefit women since most of the times international capital does not filter to women-owned enterprises but rather perpetuate inequalities.

Reflecting on scalable solutions that accelerate women’s economic empowerment, UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa Nardos Bekele-Thomas appealed for women to be supported to achieve equal economic participation through women-specific business solution centres in townships and rural areas.

“These business solution centres would provide all the services and a judicious mix of all the ingredients that would make their businesses succeed,” said Ms. Bekele-Thomas. “It would give evening classes in marketing and

entrepreneurship and help them build business plans, carry out feasibility studies and get information. It could enable us to disseminate information on procurement and prepare them to take up such opportunities.”

Responding to the central question on how economic models can work for women, Ms. Makhaya said opening the economy to accommodate a variety of business models was crucial to equitable development.

Ms. Langeni added that there was a clear mandate for money raised by the envoy investment team to come in and create employment.

“We need to ensure that local and foreign investments are very direct, we need to create jobs and therefore that means factories must be built, including schools, hospitals and infrastructure,” she said. “We need to further develop our services industry but more importantly we need to ensure that we’ve got a skilled human resource capability that will carry the country forward. That is our purpose, to make sure that as investment comes, it is directed at ensuring that every South African feels part of the South African dream.”

In her concluding remarks, Nozipho January-Bardill, the Chair of the UN Global Compact, noted the complexity inherent in transforming the economy and making women central to it but also ensuring that poor people who really feel the brunt of economic decisions can benefit.

“Our next step is for us to better understand what growth is—growth has enriched a few people, impoverished many and destroyed the environment. We need to talk about growth that takes care of people’s basic needs,” said Ms. January-Bardill, adding that success in women-owned businesses benefiting from preferential procurement, for example, needs to be assessed and replicated.

UN Women will continue to facilitate a series of engagements on Women in the Economy to strengthen the evidence-based knowledge around women’s economic participation and to examine how South Africa’s commitment to gender equality can be translated into a women-centred economic growth model, including economic reforms that propel gender equality. 

UNICEF Interview: Herve de Lys, outgoing UNICEF South Africa Representative

By Sudeshan Reddy



Herve de Lys served as the UNICEF representative in South Africa from 2014 (*check) to 2018. On the eve of the end of his tour of duty in the country, InFocus' Sudeshan Reddy sat down with him to talk about his experience over the past five years.

InFocus: What preconceptions did you have when you arrived in South Africa and were they confirmed?

Herve de Lys: I had no preconceptions because in many ways, this country is so different from where I have worked for most of my life, namely West and Central Africa. I had, of course, read the history of South Africa and as a young African, I knew about the racial discrimination, the youth uprisings, political prisoners and the role that independent African countries played in the struggle against apartheid.

There is much to be proud of in democratic South Africa and it has been a privilege to work here. I was, however, often reminded of the stark divisions that still characterize this society. Indeed, I could see the damage that apartheid has had just in terms of how people socialize as well as in the way that families are managed and run. While one is impressed by the considerable progress that continues to be made to redress the injustices of the past, deep-seated inequalities still exist, and it took me a few years to understand the full effects of apartheid and how much needs to be undone.

After nearly five years in this beautiful country I have learned that one should not make judgements based on



Herve de Lys during the interview

one's initial reaction, that it is important to ask questions, build trust and understand how the history of this country has shaped every individual and every community because apartheid in its form was unique to South Africa.

Looking back on your time in South Africa, what do you consider to be among your key achievements?

I would like to believe that I helped refocus the energy of the UNICEF South Africa team on the “journey” of the child in South Africa. I did it by engaging with my South African colleagues in particular and seeking their views, hearing their experiences, understanding their family backgrounds and respecting their history.

During my tenure, I also focused on breaking the silos that existed in terms of our how some of us worked as I believe it is important to share expertise and to not be territorial as this just fuels divisions. We also focused on bringing the End Violence agenda to the public space because the issue of violence against women and children was not always sufficiently visible in the public discourse. Today there is not a single day when this is not highlighted—from the President to everyone who has a voice in this country. I am proud that UNICEF has helped reprofile this critical issue.

How are children in South Africa faring?

We have many good reasons to be optimistic because the conversation is now in the public space and there is a clear commitment from the highest level of leadership to tackle this issue. I believe that what will make it happen is the social commitment of every individual, police officer, social worker, community member to stop looking the other way when abuse happens—particularly against

children and women—and we must report and take action because the supportive laws and politics exist in this country. If people ended apartheid they can end violence too and I am optimistic that South Africa has the capacity to make this possible.

What touched you the most in SA?

My most vivid memory is visiting the shacks in the townships and seeing how much hope and aspiration there still is despite the deprivation. Things can look bleak but in my over three decades of work in Africa I am always amazed at how the most vulnerable people sometimes have more strength than those who have everything. I have seen this in emergency situations and in situations of extreme poverty and it is this that gives me hope too.

One example was when I visited to a health centre in Hellenvale in the Eastern Cape where I saw for the first time a health centre where windows are bulletproof. Despite this, the committed staff come to work every day. This is also the case in conflict zones in Syria and Yemen, except there the threat is identified but, in this case, we do not always know for sure who will attack and when and this can be more dangerous.

What lessons have you learned?

If you want to be effective and relevant you need to show where you can make a difference and expect that this difference will not always be noticeable to the public. We must be actively present at national, provincial and local levels and be astute in the way we propose solutions. We must be ready to provide unconventional solutions and accept that our relevance will depend on our ability to provide innovative solutions to our partners.

Your next post?

I am shortly moving to join the UNICEF Office in Panama which is going to be a new adventure and I already see the opportunity to build bridges between Latin America and South Africa. I want to work on projects around violence and young people and the lessons that can be shared. As the UN prepares to launch the Young Peoples Agenda following the General Assembly in September 2018, I hope that my understanding of youth issues in Africa can be of use.

As with South Africa, I arrive with no preconceptions but rather with active listening and respect for local context and a readiness to learn. As Nelson Mandela said—and I learn something daily from him, “I never lose, I either win or I learn.” 🌍

UNFPA Symposium marks a turning point for girls and women's menstrual health in Africa

By Ziyanda Ngoma



Minister of Women in the Presidency, Bathabile Dlamini (left) with UNFPA Regional Director Dr Julitta Onabanjo

Dr. Julitta Onabanjo, the Regional Director for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for East and Southern Africa, described the recent region's first Menstrual Health Management Symposium held in Johannesburg, South Africa, as "marking a turning point [in menstrual health management] for us across the continent."

The symposium, which aims to change narratives, break down taboos and build positive social norms, was held under the theme: Improving Menstrual Health Management for Adolescent Girls and Women.

"Policy makers are increasingly aware of the return of investment around sexual and reproductive health, including menstrual health management," Dr. Onabanjo said, adding that the reason was not surprising: "Did you know that 350 million women are menstruating in Africa on any given day of the year?"

However, she said, there were enormous challenges that needed to be addressed first, noting that "African sexuality is very much a hidden thing...[but not talking about sex] perpetuates stigma and discrimination." Dr. Onabanjo called on men and boys to be included in the conversation, if menstruation is to be normalized.

"How do we socialize boys and engage men with regards to menstrual matters?" she asked, "We want them to be allies and supporters."

Dr. Onabanjo stressed the importance of fully informing women and girls to

empower themselves, observing that access to sexuality education was vital for menstrual literacy but also for self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.

She pointed out that the downside of menstrual periods needs to be tackled. "As we normalize menstruation, we must not trivialize menstrual disorders. Period cramps do hurt. Depression and Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) is real."

Stop period shaming and start empowering our girls

Bathabile Dlamini, the Minister for Women in the Presidency of the South African Government, said that an estimated one in ten girls in sub-Saharan Africa misses school at some point during their period.

"Research shows that up to seven million schoolgirls in South Africa cannot afford sanitary pads," she said, adding that access to sanitary dignity and education on menstrual health management is "a human rights issue that all of us must strive for."

The minister called for the normalization of menstruation in society. "How do we empower young girls to know that menstruation is not something to be ashamed of? We must stop period shaming in our homes, our schools,

our places of worship and all other important spaces in our lives."

Sea change for action

More than 300 participants, including government representatives, academics, regional economic communities, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, donors, youth-led organizations and other partners are contributing towards a sea change for African girls and women's menstrual health.

This includes strengthened commitment and recommendations to address barriers to menstrual health management throughout the menstrual life cycle in East and Southern Africa.

The symposium will see the launch of an African Task Force to strengthen effectiveness and collaboration for better menstrual health management in Africa. A regional menstrual health management symposium is to be convened every two years to report on progress based on commitments made.

Celebrities who preceded over the symposium included South African actress Hlubi Mboya, eSwatini rap artist KrTC of Hip Hop, and Kenyan music celebrity and menstrual health champion, King Kaka. 🌍

UNDP Discovering the “Mandela” within – leading like Mandela



Signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding with Thembekile Mandela Foundation

Nelson’s Mandela’s centenary comes at a time when South Africa, the African continent and in fact, the world at large is calling out for great leaders to step forward and provide visionary leadership; transformational leaders who will resolve the challenges the world faces today to work towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and build a better life for all – leaders leading like Mandela.

In his remarks during his Nelson Mandela 16th Annual Lecture in Johannesburg in July, U.S. President Barack Obama noted that it was in service of this long walk towards freedom and justice and equal opportunity that Mandela devoted his life.

“But through his sacrifice and unwavering leadership and, perhaps most of all, through his moral example, Mandela and the movement he led would come to signify something larger,” said President Obama, adding, “He came to embody the universal aspirations of dispossessed people all around the world, their hopes for a better life, the possibility of a moral transformation

in the conduct of human affairs.”

It was precisely this notion that inspired the co-launch of the Leading Like Mandela Leadership Programme by the Thembekile Mandela Foundation and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in December 2017. The partners commemorated Nelson Mandela Day this year by co-signing a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the programme.

“With this, we hope to contribute to the transformation of South Africa by cultivating a cadre of thought leaders who embrace the leadership qualities and values lived out by the iconic Nelson Mandela. Values that include selflessness, inclusivity, transformation, accountability and self-application,” said Nardos Bekele-Thomas, the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations and Resident Representative of UNDP in South Africa during her address at the signing ceremony.

UNDP’s role in the partnership is to inform the course content of the training aspect, identify entry points for anchoring the

programme with various institutions in the country, as it did with the National School of Government, and bring the programme to regional and international levels through documenting and sharing lessons learnt and best practices. The National School of Government will conduct the leadership training aspect of this programme, and as such, it also signed an MOU with the Thembekile Mandela Foundation.

The Leading Like Mandela Leadership Programme is aimed at continuing the legacy of Nelson Mandela by further developing transformational leadership among African and global leaders.

“Granddad’s leadership style was inspired by his attendance at tribal council. This taught him to listen and learn how to treat others with respect no matter who they are,” said Ndileka Mandela, Nelson Mandela’s eldest grandchild and the chief executive officer of the Thembekile Mandela Foundation during her address at the signing ceremony. “This programme will provide the space to empower leaders with a deeper awareness and understanding of the characteristics and qualities required to Lead Like Mandela.”

The programme is premised on a leadership framework which includes, among others, training, networking, dialogue circles, research and think tanks, events and media outreach to achieve its objectives. The programme was established by Ndileka and is directed by Dr. Liaqat Alli Azam. It continues to seek partnerships which will enhance its work to continue the Nelson Mandela legacy. 🌍

UN Environment World Environment Day: #BeatPlasticPollution

By Cecilia Njenga



Mayor Solly Msimanga picking up rubbish with volunteers in Pretoria

If you can't re-use it, refuse it! That's the slogan for this year's World Environment Day which was observed on 5 June under the theme: Beat Plastic Pollution. The aim of this year's campaign is to raise awareness and educate citizens globally about the impact the overuse of plastic is having on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13: Life on Land; and SDG 14: Life Below Water.

Plastic pollution remains one of the largest environmental threats the planet is currently facing. According to statistics from the UN Environment agency, the world uses 500 billion plastic bags a year, with 50% of them being used just once. This results in 8 million tonnes of plastic finding their way to the oceans killing about 100,000 marine animals per year.

This year's call was made to governments, industries and individuals to explore sustainable alternatives and reduce the production and excessive use of single-use plastic polluting oceans, damaging marine life and threatening human health. Consumers have been called upon to pause and examine their relationship with plastic. There is a large consumption of single-use plastic daily. This could easily be eliminated through the use of reusable material bags that are available in many stores across South Africa.

While industries continue to innovate, there is still a desperate need for companies and organizations to explore sustainable alternatives and embrace the idea of extended producer responsibility by which a manufacturer takes responsibility for the entire life cycle of their product.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) stated in its recent budget policy statement its eagerness to find ways to reduce plastic pollution in the country. There are several ways that this can be achieved simultaneously, beginning with changing consumer behavior and promoting environmental sustainability.

South Africa has been recycling over the years and the current rate is estimated to be at about 42%. However, although the nation continues to recycle, plastic pollution remains a serious challenge and more still needs to be done.

The late South Africa's Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, launched the Thuma Mina (Sent Me)/green good deeds campaign on World Environment Day. The campaign aims to encourage citizens to aspire to a clean and beautiful South Africa, to change their behavior towards waste and the environment and to educate them on the responsibilities for keeping clean communities.

Many companies have already pledged to stop using plastic. Some initiatives include a ban on all plastic from all their Eastern Cape stores by Spar, a chain of supermarkets. They have replaced their plastic bags with reusable bags which can carry up to 12kgs of shopping goods. On World Environment Day, Woolworths South Africa announced that by 2022, all their brand plastic packaging will be reusable and recyclable. In addition, the supermarket chain has also committed to phasing out single-use plastic shopping bags by 2020.

With such encouraging measures, it is to be hoped that South Africa would reduce its dependency on plastics and continue to explore alternatives resulting in achieving the relevant SDGs by 2030. 🌍



Prof. Linda Godfrey from CSIR and Cecilia Njenga of UN Environment



Some of the attendees at the first UNHCR Iftar evening in Pretoria, South Africa. © L. Chemany

UNHCR Refugee Agency holds first interfaith Iftar evening in support of refugees

By Tina Ghelli

With support from the private sector, special Iftar meal takes place in Pretoria to show solidarity for families displaced from their homes.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in June hosted its first interfaith Iftar evening as part of its global Ramadan campaign, Hand in Hand, to shine a spotlight on refugees during the holy month.

In her welcome remarks to members of the Islamic diplomatic corps, the South African Muslim community and government officials, the then Officer-in-Charge of the UNHCR's Regional Office for Southern Africa, Veronica Irima Modey-Ebi, said that the event symbolized that despite people's different nationalities and irrespective of their religion, their presence at the event represented the community of humanity. She paid tribute to countries represented by the diplomats for hosting refugees and supporting UNHCR programmes.

The Turkish Ambassador to South Africa, Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen, explained that the month of Ramadan is a time when people are willing to share, and the sharing of dinner was a great approach towards tolerance.

"While we are enjoying this lovely dinner, there are human beings around the globe not so far away, who are really suffering," she said. She told her audience that Turkey is currently hosting 3.5 million refugees mostly from Syria and Iraq.

"This has really never been a matter of political debate and this is something we are very much proud of, because the alternative of not hosting them was to let them perish, the children, the women, the elderly, the men. That's why I'm grateful to my government and people who are voluntarily taking this not as a burden, but as a duty. Not only as a duty of Islam but a duty of humanity," said the ambassador.

There was great appreciation from the Islamic diplomatic corps and the South African Muslim community for the evening with many saying this was the first time they had seen a United Nations agency host an Iftar in South Africa.

Tresor Riziki, a musician, artist and the winner of the 2018 South African Music Awards Pop Album of the year and a former refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, shared a story of his flight from his homeland. "We are hoping to change the narrative of the refugee. Refugees are not only people who come to take but can also give," he explained.

The Iftar evening was held in cooperation with BluBlood South Africa, one of the sponsors of the Iftar. Shaista Khan Osman, the chief executive officer of BluBlood South Africa, paid tribute to the partnership with UNHCR. "To have all of these representatives from across the world coming together for one meal, Iftar, signifying we are here today in support of refugees displaced all across the globe is significant," he said.

The holy month of Ramadan, which concludes with the festival of Eid al-Fitr, is traditionally a time for reflection and gathering among families and communities across the Muslim world, as well as for acts of solidarity and generosity. 🌸



UNICEF Safe Parks – the best gift

By Sudeshan Reddy

The road to the town of Alice in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa takes one through lush, rolling hills before plateauing as the iconic University of Fort Hare approaches, the alma mater of numerous African statesmen, including the former President Nelson Mandela. As one drives through Alice, attention is drawn to two brightly coloured former shipping containers that represent the Alice Safe Park. With its neatly-cut grass, freshly painted playground and welcoming atmosphere, it is not hard to see why it's a "safe" space.

On this quiet Monday afternoon, the park coordinators are busy preparing food and keeping the space tidy and clean before the children arrive from school. Nomalungisa, the manager of the park, speaks passionately about the need for such spaces to exist in communities that are afflicted by poverty and violence. Her colleagues, Fezeka and Thandi, concur and speak

about the children and youth whose lives have been changed by the Alice Safe Park.

A good example of one such youth is 22-year-old Sesona, who has been visiting the parks since she was a teenager. Coming from a troubled background and facing numerous difficulties herself, this soft-spoken but confident young woman found the atmosphere at the park welcoming and supportive.

Today, Sesona is tasked with helping with the homework of the school-going children, and regularly assists the staff in the day-to-day running of the park. About to start university, which she attributes to the Safe Park as they helped her with the application process and the fee, Sesona maintains that she would like to continue supporting the work of the park while pursuing university studies and even after she graduates.

"I felt my stress go away," she says as she explains how the staff at the Safe Park gave her advice, comfort and guidance at a time in her life when she needed it the most. As the mother of a three-year-old, Sesona speaks of how the women who run the park help her raise the child. The safe park is her "second home," she says, and her happy, healthy little daughter seems to agree.

Sesona feels that even more can be done, especially to support teenagers in an area rife with of substance abuse and violence, where safe parks are needed the most. She called for more food donations, more community support and awareness campaigns.

Her name means "the best gift" in her Xhosa language, but for Sesona, the Isibindi Safe Park has been her best gift. 🌈



FAO Legislators in Africa address food security and nutrition challenges

FAO Representative Lewis Hove and Honourable Jacqueline Amongin – 1st Vice President PAPA FSN at the PAN African Parliament

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has embarked on a programme to strengthen the capacity of African lawmakers to address food security and nutrition challenges on the continent.

This follows the signing of a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) agreement on “strengthening capacities of Parliamentarians in Africa for an enabling environment for Food Security and Nutrition” between FAO and the Pan African Parliament (PAP) in October 2017.

In May this year, various stakeholders, including members of the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA – FSN) and a delegation from the FAO held an inception workshop in Midrand, South Africa, which was also attended by government representatives from the four project pilot countries (Cameroon, Madagascar, Sierra Leone and Uganda) of the African Union.

At the workshop participants agreed the TCP project would provide skills

to strengthen the capacities of PAP members to position food security and nutrition at the highest levels of the political and legislative agendas. The project, with funding of US\$350,000, is expected to be completed by October 2019.

Stakeholders commit to ending hunger and malnutrition

Despite the right to adequate food, there is staggering hunger and malnutrition among Africans. This demands structural reforms to create an enabling environment for food security and nutrition, along with relevant policies and legislation.

Africa faces the burden of malnutrition and is not on course to meet many of the World Health Assembly (WHA) Nutrition targets for the next decade, although some countries face better prospects than others.

Under the Malabo Declaration of 2014, African leaders committed themselves to reducing stunting to below 10% on the continent and underweight in children under five year to below 5% by 2025, with the aim of

eliminating hunger in Africa in the next decade. The Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy 2015-2025 outlines the role to be played by the African Union Commission in eliminating hunger and malnutrition.

“**Evidence has shown that food security and nutrition policies and frameworks that are anchored in legislation are more effective and sustainable.**”

Lewis Hove, the FAO Country Representative for South Africa, told participants in his opening remarks at the workshop. Parliamentarians, he said, are therefore critical partners in the fight to eradicate poverty and malnutrition given their legislative, budgetary and policy oversight roles. 🌍

UNAIDS South Africa reports progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic

South Africa has released new survey data indicating progress in reducing new HIV infections. If intensified, this progress could put the country on track to reach its 2020 milestone for ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: ensuring healthy lives for all.

The South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (SABSSM V) 2017, conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), estimates that about 7.9 million people are living with HIV in South Africa, around 1.2 million more than in 2012 when the fourth survey was conducted. The study also says there was a 44% reduction in the rate of new adult HIV infections between 2012 and 2017.

The survey was conducted among more than 39,000 people of all ages and locations in South Africa. The results play a vital role in helping the country to review and refine its HIV programming to make sure that the right services are reaching people affected by HIV. The latest results confirm other estimates that South Africa has improved treatment coverage and is very close to reaching the 90-90-90 treatment

targets, with 85% of people living with HIV knowing their HIV status, 71% of people who know their status accessing antiretroviral treatment and 87% of people accessing treatment also having suppressed viral loads, which prevents onward transmission.

These percentages translate into 4.4 million people receiving antiretroviral treatment in 2017, of whom more than 3.8 million are virally suppressed. The 90-90-90 treatment targets means that 90% of people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90% of people who know their status are receiving antiretroviral treatment, and 90% of people on treatment have suppressed viral loads.

Progress in reducing new infections or increasing treatment coverage and achieving viral suppression, however, has not been equal across all sex and age groups. The decline in incidence since 2012 has been only 17% among adolescents and youth aged 15-24, with an 11% increase among boys and young men.

Treatment coverage among adolescents and youth living with HIV has been only 40%, compared to 63% among 25-49 age group and 77% among people 50 years old and above. Viral suppression

level is lowest among men 25-34, where only 42% of those living with HIV were virally suppressed. Paediatric treatment coverage has also only reached to 50% of children living with HIV.

Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi said the results demonstrated that South Africa's AIDS response was on track.

"It's gratifying that some of our hard work is starting to pay off," he said at the launch of the survey. However, he also called for more health and sex education in schools, noting that young people were not as naïve and innocent as many parents assumed, but they were prone to being misinformed without structured information.

South Africa has had less success in behavioural and structural interventions to prevent new HIV infections, with adolescent girls and young women at particular risk due to age-disparate sexual relationships, multiple sexual partnerships and low condom use.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator in South Africa, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, said the data highlighted opportunities for political and policy measures to tackle the AIDS epidemic by addressing vulnerabilities.



She pledged continued UN support to South Africa’s “inspirational approach.”

The HSRC survey was sponsored through financial and technical support by the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNAIDS. These organizations are now partnering with South African institutions to develop strategic information in support of the national HIV response.

UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé emphasized the importance of the survey results to the national response.

“To have an impact for people and communities,” he said, “we need to know the HIV epidemic, identify the gaps and barriers and use the data to address key behavioural and structural drivers.” Mr. Sidibé called for an examination on how to decrease tuberculosis rates because the co-infection rates with HIV were high.

In July, UNAIDS also released its global report on the state of the AIDS epidemic, “Miles to Go”, which includes data sourced from South Africa’s Thembisa model. The UNAIDS report warned that progress was slowing down worldwide, and time was running out to

reach the 2020 HIV targets. According to the report, new HIV infections were rising in about 50 countries, AIDS-related deaths were not falling fast enough and a lack of new resources was threatening success.

Mr. Sidibé warned that the global response to HIV was at a precarious point and too slow. He called for immediate action to put the world on course to reach critical 2020 targets.

“We are sounding the alarm,” he said. “Entire regions are falling behind, the huge gains we made for children are not being sustained, women are still most affected, resources are still not matching political commitments and key populations continue to be ignored. All these elements are halting progress and urgently need to be addressed head-on.”

This is a pivotal year for the response to tuberculosis (TB), with a UN High-Level Meeting in September expected to generate new commitments and momentum for ending the epidemic, which is also a target of SDG 3. There have been strong gains in treating and diagnosing HIV among people with TB, but TB is still the biggest killer of people living with HIV. South Africa has one of

the largest epidemics of TB and recently introduced a new drug, Bedaquiline, for multi-drug resistant TB cases at a lower cost.

The UNAIDS report, Miles to Go, can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/2NZIE4A>

The UNAIDS Data 2018 can be downloaded here: <https://goo.gl/pvjwpm>

The key findings of the HSRC survey can be downloaded here: <https://bit.ly/2LCIx1P>

UNAIDS estimates that in 2017 globally:

36.9 million
people were living with HIV

21.7 million
people were accessing treatment

1.8 million
people became newly infected with HIV

940 000
people died from AIDS-related illnesses

IOM Pretoria office relocates to new premises in Walker Creek Office Park



Director of Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) Ambassador N.K.M. Seleka cutting the ribbon to officially open IOM's new building alongside Regional Director for IOM Southern Africa Charles Kwenin.

Effective July this year, the country and regional offices of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in South Africa have moved from their old premises in Hatfield suburb to Muckleneuk in Pretoria. IOM celebrated the move with an official opening ceremony attended by senior partners from the diplomatic community, the United Nations, the



UN Resident Coordinator Nardos Bekele Thomas with Regional Director for IOM Southern Africa Charles Kwenin.

South African government and non-governmental organizations.

The move to new offices forms part of a greater IOM mission to improve infrastructure to better support beneficiaries and increase access to migrant-sensitive services that IOM is a pioneer in delivering. The new building at Walker Creek Office Park will be a pivot from where IOM continues to carry out its critical work and fulfilling the mandate to assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of managing migration.

During the opening ceremony, Richard Ots, Chief of Mission for IOM South Africa, emphasized the importance of improved facilities to deliver adequate and efficient services to beneficiaries.

“IOM Pretoria remains committed to providing the best possible services

to migrants and the government, but also to donors and other stakeholders,” he told the gathering. “We are convinced that having moved to the new building allows us to do so, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of our work.”

Charles Kwenin, Regional Director for IOM Southern Africa, expressed his gratitude to partners and attributed IOM's growth in the region to successful partnerships with government and many other relevant organizations working on migration issues.

“I seize this opportunity to thank you for your continued support at different levels and wish to reiterate our commitment to continue serving our two most important beneficiaries, our respected member states and migrants,” Mr. Kwenin said.

He added that IOM also celebrates its expansion in the Southern Africa Region with a presence in 15 out of the 16 countries of the Southern African Development Community. “IOM prides itself for being the proximity agency—not only geographically but also in terms of its closeness to migrants—and this has been particularly true in southern Africa,” he said.

The building was officially opened by the Director of Humanitarian Affairs at the South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Ambassador N.K.M. Seleka, along with UN Resident Coordinator Nardos Bekele-Thomas, and IOM Director for Resource Management, Joseph Appiah.

The new address is: Walker Creek Office Park, 90 Florence Ribeiro Ave, Muckleneuk, Pretoria, 0181.



UNIDO Strengthening relationships with development partners

Participants at UNIDO's high-level symposium

A symposium recently organized by the United Nations Development Organization (UNIDO) in collaboration with the South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) offered a unique platform to coordinate and exchange knowledge on the effective implementation of current and future projects between the entities and their partners.

The symposium was attended by representatives of the DTI, the Department of International Relations and Co-operation as well as the private sector, including the ABSA Bank and Hewlett Packard with whom UNIDO has embarked on a youth-focused entrepreneurial development programme in South Africa.

In his statement at the event, which was opened by Anneline Chetty, the Chief Operating Officer at the DTI, UNIDO Representative in South Africa, Khaled El Mekwad, emphasized the need to capitalize on the impact of development in the country and around the world.

"This session is focused on showcasing how UNIDO's projects effectively produce development impact," said El Mekwad, adding "UNIDO looks forward to further engaging with its stakeholders in South Africa to maximize outcomes".

The UNIDO team presented the organization's mandate of promoting industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability, which are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular Goal 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure. They also offered an overview of the projects currently underway in the country and of UNIDO's work related to Industry 4.0—which focuses on the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies.

UNIDO highlighted its partnership approach as well as requirements related to the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded projects. GEF-funded projects include those related to biodiversity, climate change, chemicals

and waste, international waters and land degradation.

A case study of the National Cleaner Production Centre of South Africa (NCPC-SA) demonstrated the partnership with UNIDO work and how it has become the leading National Cleaner Production Centre in Africa. The case study also focused on the Centre's work on industrial energy efficiency (IEE) and how it helps companies optimize energy consumption while enhancing economic competitiveness. The success of NCPC-SA led to an expansion of its portfolio to include, among others, water efficiency and industrial symbiosis. With a strong focus on skills development in IEE projects, the NCPC-SA also offers training in many countries throughout the world.

The DTI expressed its interest to bolster collaboration with UNIDO on Industry 4.0, regional integration in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, agro-processing, green industries, women empowerment and transformation as well as research and data gathering. 🌍

UNICEF Lego: adding colour to children's playtime

By Sudeshan Reddy

“Tomatoes are red, and apples are green!” exclaimed an enthusiastic group of three-year-olds at the Diepsloot Pre-School as they proudly held up red and green Lego bricks in their little hands.

Colour identification is but one way that Lego is being used as a teaching tool by teachers at this light-filled sanctuary that lies in the middle of the noisy, energetic township of Diepsloot, north of Johannesburg, South Africa.

The excitement of the 25 children in each group is palpable as Gertrude Peyani, a teacher, opens the colourful box and announces, “It is Lego time!”

A recipient of four boxes from the Lego Foundation, the school has been using the boxes as a teaching tool for the three- and four-year-olds. Two teachers from the school received training from the Foundation on how best to ‘teach’ Lego.

Explaining the difference that the training has made, Ms. Peyani says: “I feel empowered and proud when I see Lego these days because now I know what to do to make a difference,” adding, “There really is no limit to the potential of what can be taught by Lego.” 🌈



Diepsloot Pre-School using Lego bricks as a teaching tool for the three and four-year-olds.



Lego time at the Kids for Success Centre is located in the city of Kimberly in the Northern Cape province of South Africa.

UNICEF Loving Lego, learning Lego

By Sudeshan Reddy

“I love Lego,” exclaims five-year-old Dominic as he puts together the finishing touches to his tower using only green Lego bricks as requested by his teacher, Lu-Anne Pieterse.

The Kids for Success Centre is located in the city of Kimberley in the Northern Cape Province, South Africa’s largest, though the most sparsely populated province. It is a region where most inhabitants live below the poverty line. In collaboration with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Department of Education, the Lego Foundation is working towards breaking the cycle of poverty in which many children and their families are trapped.

By providing innovative learning at effective Early Childhood Development Centres, the

Lego Foundation is helping to provide the pillars for a solid understanding of basic skills.

The ‘Lego lessons’ are held three times a week for 30 minutes and the feedback from the children so far is encouraging. “I like the nice colours,” say Jamie and Santano, almost in unison, while Dudu likes the way “we learn maths” in the Lego lessons.

For Lu-Anne Pieterse, the training provided by the Lego Foundation was very helpful as it taught her that “Lego is so much more than a toy which was all I used to see it as until now”. Laughing, she adds that the “kids now think I am the best teacher.” 🌈



UNDP Co-financing cross-cutting projects to maximize development outcomes

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires countries to maximize the use of domestic resources and invest in high-impact interventions that can address multiple goals and targets across different sectors at once. These interventions exist with social protection as a powerful example. Amongst other impacts, social protection has been shown to alleviate poverty, strengthen food security, reduce gender and economic inequalities and improve education and health outcomes.

However, when deciding where to allocate their budgets, government sectors tend to evaluate their options in isolation. They often use conventional, sector-specific methods of calculating cost-effectiveness that only focus on a narrow set of outcomes and tend not to factor the spill-over benefits to other sectors.

The result is that high-value, cross-cutting programmes often appear too costly for a single payer (e.g. the ministry of education or health) to fund on its own, so they go under-valued, under-financed and under-implemented. In simple terms, cost-effective programmes that should be implemented or taken to scale are not, and as a result welfare is lost.

With funds from the Japanese Government, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is providing technical support to seven countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia) to kick-start cross-sectoral co-financing as an innovative strategy to implement Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As part of this initiative, early this year UNDP organized a three-day regional workshop in Johannesburg to discuss how governments could achieve value for money to implement SDGs. The workshop was attended by senior government officials from several sectors from five of the seven countries.

Cross-sectoral co-financing is an approach that recognises that win-win structural interventions can be funded more efficiently if benefitting sectors pool their resources together, with contributions guided by each sector's willingness to pay for expected results. It is in using these financing models that governments could save money while advancing multiple development objectives that could potentially achieve better efficiencies in financing the SDGs.

"The financing for development landscape places an onus on national governments to not only increase available resources, including through innovative approaches, but also to invest resources more efficiently," said Nelly Mwaka, an HIV/AIDS Officer with UNDP in South Africa, in her opening remarks. "One logical and commonly recommended way to invest more efficiently is to prioritize high-value interventions which deliver impacts across multiple goals and targets, across different sectors, all at once."

Participants from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicines presented various models for consideration, with examples of successful co-financed projects. Country representatives exchanged experiences, critiqued models and explored best possible ways to implement co-financing in their respective countries. Potential challenges were raised, and the participants demonstrated their experience in working in resource-constrained environments and the realities that they encounter in their respective countries.

During the discussions, attendees collectively identified strategies to address bottle-necks. They highlighted the importance of national policies and priorities to guide the selection of potential co-financed interventions and investments. The importance of bottle-neck analyses, multi-sectoral planning, budgeting, accounting and monitoring and evaluation

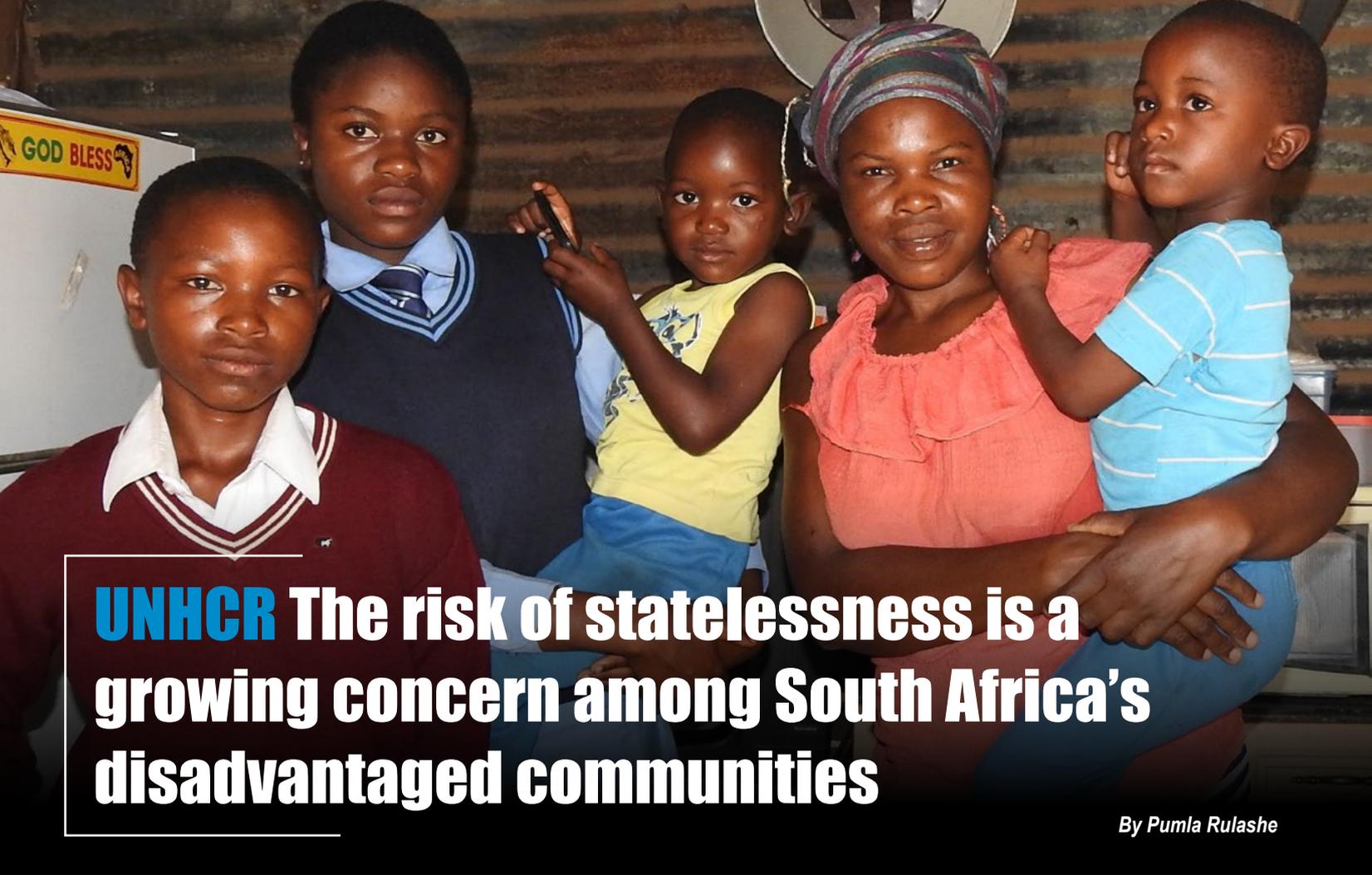
frameworks, along with long-term thinking and planning, were identified.

The workshop emphasized the need to challenge the status quo of spending in silos and demonstrated how this misses major opportunities to make progress and prevents more efficient investment. Delegates were supposed to consider models that could be applicable to them and to use existing frameworks to introduce the concept in their respective countries.

The workshop participants made it clear that there was no one right way of implementing this kind of co-financing: noting that it was a means to an end; was institutionally feasible; and that implementation was not straight forward as it required work to initiate. Each country identified its own potential cross-sectoral co-financed project.

South Africa will focus on expanding the cash plus care programme for adolescent girls and young women in KwaZulu-Natal Province after consultations with the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) and the province's office of the premier. When it was designed, the project had the added advantage of having taken into consideration SDG 5 on gender equality.

In her closing remarks, UNDP's Pallavi Yanik reiterated that the agency would continue to work with the selected countries to implement feasible co-financed projects with modelling of impact and costs by the STRIVE research consortium, and to provide spaces to foster learning and knowledge sharing, as well as offer facilitation support through the UNDP consultant. The co-financing workshop was led by UNDP's New York headquarters in collaboration with STRIVE and supported by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Teresa Guthrie, a UNDP consultant on Cross-Sectoral Co-financing, coordinated the workshop, which was hosted by the South Africa country office. 🌍



UNHCR The risk of statelessness is a growing concern among South Africa's disadvantaged communities

By Pumla Rulashe

Lebo Maphoditsa with her four children at their home in Pretoria © UNHCR/Pumla Rulashe

Lebo Maphoditsa cannot recall a time from her adolescence when she has slept soundly through the night. Since the age of 15, Lebo has gone from pillar to post in her quest to acquire a South African identity document, which she is denied because she has no birth certificate or proof of registration of birth.

Abandoned by a young mother who died shortly after giving birth to her, Maphoditsa, now 36 years old, became the dependent of her domestic worker grandmother, Lizzy, who in turn, relied on the kindness of a neighbor, Betty Mokone, to look after her granddaughter in her absence.

"In those days," explains Maphoditsa, "domestic workers weren't allowed to take family members to live with them in white suburbs, so she was left with no choice but to leave me with a friend. When she had a few days off, she would come to the township to see me."

When Maphoditsa turned three, however, grandmother Lizzy passed away. As relatives made plans to fetch her remains for burial in Polokwane, none of them thought or offered to take Maphoditsa with them, to raise amongst family.

"This is how I came to remain with granny Betty," says Maphoditsa.

By all accounts, Maphoditsa has lived a difficult life.

"I never felt the warmth and love of family," she says. "At school I was teased as 'that girl who has no parents' while at home I was subjected to constant reminders that no one wanted me, I was nobody and that I belonged nowhere."

By the age of 10, the taunts of her peers became too much to tolerate and Maphoditsa dropped out of school. For five years, she steeled herself against the taunts and abuse she received at the

hands of her guardian, because she had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

"Whenever I tried to ask about my biological family, all granny Betty would tell me is that no one wanted me and that I should stop bothering her with questions she couldn't answer."

At the age of 15, Maphoditsa's guardian passed away. For the third time in her young life, she was abandoned. For two years, Maphoditsa lived with her school-going friends who spoke of their future with great expectations as they came closer to completing secondary school.

The excitement with which these discussions were held made Maphoditsa realize that to become a productive member of society, she needed to complete her formal education. To re-register as a student, Maphoditsa needed a birth certificate, a document she didn't have.

“Just when I had made peace with not having a family, not having a birth certificate took my life in a direction I could never have imagined.”

For months, Maphoditsa went from one branch of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) to another, explaining her plight, begging for assistance. While many officials sympathized over her predicament, their responses were always the same. Without a birth certificate, she had to bring a parent or relative who could vouch for her claim that she is born of South African parents.

“In my situation, where would I find this person?” she asks. “I was stuck and so was my life.”

At 18, Maphoditsa found solace and the solution to her problems in the overtures of a man who through his identity document, would not only become a provider and the father of her four children, but would be her conduit to government’s services to its citizens – at least for the 17 years they lived together.

When Maphoditsa’s relationship with the father of her children ended in 2017, she was back at square one—knocking on the door of the DHA, looking for a solution to a problem that had multiplied, with the birth of her four children.

It took one sympathetic official of the DHA to point her in the direction of Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), the legal assistance partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN refugee agency.

On behalf of UNHCR, LHR manages a Statelessness Project. The project is an initiative started in 2011 to assist people of concern to the agency, who for various reasons, including Maphoditsa’s, find themselves undocumented and unable to claim nationality/citizenship and the rights and privileges accruing from this status.

According to LHR Legal Counsellor Lusungu Kanyama Phiri, Maphoditsa’s predicament is typical of someone at risk of statelessness.

“Through no fault of her own but by virtue of birth into circumstances that have consistently denied her of the opportunities her peers and friends enjoy, because she was not registered at birth,

Maphoditsa cannot apply for an identity document.”

Phiri has tasked Maphoditsa with gathering as much information as possible to support her claim to South African citizenship, which begins with an application for late registration of birth.

“I have asked her to try and trace any of Betty Mokone’s relatives but if this fails, to get affidavits from the friends she grew up with including township ward councillors to support her claim to citizenship.”

According to UNHCR, Maphoditsa and at least 10 million people around the world today, can and are denied a nationality. As a result, they often aren’t allowed to go to school, see a doctor, get a job, open a bank account, buy a house or even get married.

Stateless people or people at risk of statelessness, may have difficulty accessing basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement. Without these things, they can face a lifetime of obstacles and disappointment.

Although South Africa has not ratified the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons nor the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, it is party to several treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child, which effectively promotes every person’s right to nationality.

“Domestically,” says Phiri, “Section 28 of the constitution demonstrates the importance of nationality and the Citizenship Act states that a child born in South Africa is South African by birth, if it is registered.”

If Maphoditsa is unsuccessful in getting the information she requires to approach the DHA to apply for late registration of birth, Phiri will through Section 15 of South Africa’s Citizenship Act – ‘citizenship in cases of doubt’ – approach through an application, the minister of home affairs, for his consideration to, in “special circumstances where someone is unable to prove nationality, determine whether they can be recognised as a citizen.”

“If this is unsuccessful,” says Phiri, “we will go through an appeal process. If this doesn’t work, we can escalate the case to

the High Court for judicial review.” “Maphoditsa’s case shows that having a nationality and being able to prove one’s nationality may be two very different things,” says Matthias Reuss, UNHCR Senior Regional Protection Officer responsible for statelessness issues. “While South Africa’s Citizenship Act provides a very good legal framework, practical and administrative obstacles may lead to actual statelessness.” While the judicial processes in place to address this problem slowly unfolds, Maphoditsa and her children now live a precarious existence.

Without a birth certificate, Maphoditsa was unable to register the birth of her children despite their father having an identity document. The whole family is not only at risk of statelessness but the thought that her children will repeat the cycle of her fruitless and frustrating life, keeps Maphoditsa awake at night with worry.

Her oldest child and daughter, Itumeleng is 14 years old. She has already begun to feel the ever-tightening pressure of her mother’s undocumented status. Since her father left them, the family has moved three times because Maphoditsa, still unemployed, cannot pay the rent and provide enough food for her children.

“I’ve even been called to school because she has collapsed from hunger,” says Maphoditsa, tearfully.

“I don’t know where our next meal will come from.”

In three years’ time, Itumeleng will be expected to register for her Grade 12 national exams, a milestone in her education that should help determine her future. Without a birth certificate she will not be able to apply for an identity document which is needed to sit for the exams, she will become the text book example of the second generation of a family at risk of statelessness – something UNHCR wants to prevent at all costs.

For UNHCR and Phiri, resolving Maphoditsa’s problem before her daughter reaches this stage is of great importance. Her future and that of her family depends on it. 🌍

UNIC Making profits and creating social impact through shared value

By Zeenat Abdool

Tiekie Barnard is the director of Shift Social Development, a Johannesburg-based advocacy group that seeks to get the private sector on board in supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa while making profits and creating social impact at the same time. In this interview with InFocus' Zeenat Abdool, Ms. Barnard talks about her organization's role in campaigning for the shared value concept.

InFocus: What exactly is Shift Social Development all about?

Tiekie Barnard: Shift Social Development is the regional partner of the global Shared Value initiative. Our objective is to create awareness of the shared value concept and to motivate the private sector to change strategy to one of creating shared value in order to bring big-scale changes. Shared Value is about private sector creating economic value so that they can make profits but also creating value for society and looking at their social impact at the same time. It is not corporate social investment (CSI). I think it often gets confused as such because CSI is about sharing the value of the money you have made; so, you would typically find that a company would give money to a non-profit organization (NPO) or non-governmental organization (NGO). What we are saying with shared value to CEOs is that you can still make your money while at the same time creating a positive social impact on society as well.

How did the concept come about, and what are companies doing?

The concept was born in 2011 when Prof. Michael Porter and Mark Kramer from Harvard University, who have been involved in business strategy for quite a long time, had a look at the impact of corporate social investment and the impact of NPOs and NGOs. Between the two of them they came up with the idea that if we can get organizations to make money while they are addressing

a societal issue, we will be able to bring about change on a big scale. For example, almost 10 years ago, Safaricom in Kenya made money transfer via cellphones accessible to Kenyans under a programme called Mpesa. You can transfer money to your family in the rural areas so that you don't have to get on to a taxi to take money to your grandmother. By allowing people to transfer money electronically via their cellphones, they have given access to 17 million Kenyans who previously were excluded from the financial sector. As a result, they have created a more inclusive society by including the 17 million people on Mpesa. About four years ago, these people were contributing about 4% to the Kenyan gross domestic product.

There is also a focus on SDGs. Why and how does it relate to Shared Value?

There was a report done by the Business Commission where they looked at different sectors and found out that if companies addressed SDGs and we reach our development goals by 2030, the amount of money they could make is about \$12 trillion. If we eradicate poverty, if we get into agriculture, if we get into renewable energy, if we find out how we can improve education, if we can do a lot of that there will be an enormous amount of money to be made by the private sector. But we all have to work together to bring that about.

You have just concluded the second Africa Shared Value Summit. What was so significant about the summit?

In 2016, we had to create awareness of the Shared Value concept, because we realized when we started out on the Shared Value journey there was not an awareness of Shared Value. People were confusing it with corporate social investment. We brought in the SDGs in a very subtle way: people could go and vote for their favourite SDG. They could write their name on it and then commit to it and put it on a board. Creating awareness was a part of the campaign in 2017. This year

the theme was "Meeting the Challenge" and it was about Africa meeting the challenges of the SDGs. Every speaker had to interlink the SDGs with their topic. In terms of what happens afterwards, this year we launched the Shared Value Africa Initiative at the summit. One of the objectives is to drive Shared Value across our continent, to create this eco-system where we can all work together and also in the process align our work with the SDGs, because Shared Value is a great way to implement the SDGs. If you align your Shared Value strategy to the SDGs, it is a match made in heaven.

What are some of the changes you have seen since last year's summit?

I think we have definitely seen an uptake from 2017 to this year. However, I do believe there is still a lot of work to be done. There is a lot of information sharing that still has to happen from a Shared Value and SDG perspective. Organizations must understand how their companies can benefit if they align themselves with the SDGs, and that for us is the big thing. There are organizations that are already doing it including ABSA Bank, Woolworths and Nandos. Often companies are aligning their businesses to the SDGs but they just don't know it.

Next year the summit is expected to take place in Kenya. Why Kenya specifically?

What we realized when we held the 2017 and 2018 summits here in South Africa is that if we want to really create this regional Shared Value community and create awareness about how to align your Shared Value strategy to the SDGs, then we have to speak to the rest of Africa, not just to the southern point of Africa. We must involve the rest of Africa, and we have always brought them down here for the summit. But next year we are going to Kenya for the summit, and we are really looking forward to it. 🌍

UNDP Learning to leapfrog in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The first and second revolutions have passed many people by in a world where one-third of the population (2.4 billion people) lack access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation, and one-sixth (1.2 billion people) have no electricity. Even though more than 3 billion people have access to the internet, that still leaves 4 billion people out of the third industrial revolution.

If the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be realized and ensure that no-one is left behind, a collective responsibility amongst all stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, communities and individuals needs to take education in all its forms more seriously to allow adaptation in the evolution of humankind.

In late June this year, young diplomats from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) and BRICS Plus countries (including Angola, Indonesia, Jamaica and Rwanda) and the United Nations participated in the Young Diplomats Forum in Johannesburg. The forum, whose theme was, “BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution,” brought together future leaders who recognize and are committed to the aims of the SDGs. They recognized that learning from the past put into perspective the requirements for ensuring that poverty is tackled, inequality is addressed, and inclusion is non-negotiable.

To put it into historical and cultural context, the impact of science and technology, its contribution to innovation and relevance to the African continent framed the legacy of Nelson Mandela’s vision of the youth.

It is the responsibility of young people to change the course of history, said the Deputy Minister for the Department of

International Relations and Cooperation, Reginah Mhaule, in his opening remarks.

“If young people are to be the catalyst for change,” she said, “they will need the necessary tools to be effectively equipped. We need to see more collaboration in areas of skills transfer, knowledge partnerships and best-practice sharing in order to stimulate innovation and empower all people equally. Mandela believed that young people are a country’s most important asset. He argued with conviction that the youth need to be protected, empowered and nurtured to build a rich and united country.”

The relevance of the delegation’s visit to the Sterkfontein Caves in Gauteng Province illustrated the magnitude of the number of discoveries that are yet to be made. Professor Lee Burger, a world-renowned paleoanthropologist from the University of Witwatersrand found more than 60 new fossils in 600 exploration sites never seen before in the world by using Google Earth, just after its inception in 2001.

“The young team that was instrumental in this expedition demonstrates that we need to change the way we view our ancestry and the way in which humanity views and understands the world,” said Prof. Burger.

The focus on business and the economy, specifically on entrepreneurship and accessing finance to break into the new industry, highlighted the recurring elements of the BRICS 2018 theme: innovation, technology, collaboration, sustainable development and growth, skills development, education and sharing best-practices to create an equal distribution of wealth and prosperity for all. This was summarized aptly by Tevern Jaftha from the Small Enterprise and Development Agency who implored the youth to think and act differently and transform their minds constantly to keep

up with the rapid rate of technological advancements.

“We need to read and extract the information we have available at our fingertips and understand what the gaps and needs are,” he said, adding: “Education gives you the tools to articulate at a certain level, therefore the language of coding will be a requirement to understand and communicate at that level in the future.” Using China as an example of “learning from the best to become the best,” he illustrated the potential of a country that has learned from the most developed nations and used their findings to disrupt other markets.

These sentiments tied into the reflection of the address on the first day of the forum by the Minister of the Department of Science and Technology, Mamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, who said, “We need competitive advantage solutions, and innovation is a key driver for sustainable development and growth.” She urged participants to share their experiences and expertise and to support small and medium enterprises and to promote grassroots innovation and enterprise in order to help bridge the divide.

An enthusiastic and engaged delegation was left with solid advice from the Premier of the Gauteng Province, David Makura, who told them that “young people change the course of history by helping to reimagine a different world than the one we have today,” adding, “This world should be built with inclusion as the main organizing idea for business and government, with ethical leadership as the starting point.”

Leveraging collective resources of BRICS countries in line with the SDGs is a unique opportunity to build a new world order, especially amongst the youth who make up the majority of the world’s population. 🌍

UNHCR South Africa commemorates World Refugee Day at the Constitution Hill



By Markku Aikomus

Officials at the World Refugee Day ceremony

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) celebrated the World Refugee Day on 20 June at a ceremony held at the Constitution Hill in Johannesburg with refugees and asylum-seekers as well as governments and partners to honour the courage, strength and resilience of women, men and children who are forced to flee their homes under threat of persecution, conflict and violence.

This year's commemoration was organized by the South Africa's Department of Home Affairs and UNHCR, in collaboration with the Gauteng Province, the City of Johannesburg, civil society, refugees and host communities. The objective was to educate the general public on the causes and impact of global forced displacement; show solidarity and empathy with people forced to flee; promote social cohesion; prevent xenophobia and promote peaceful co-existence between refugees, asylum-seekers and their host communities as well as to show appreciation to the South Africa for hosting some 280,000 refugees and asylum-seekers.

The main event was a five-kilometre Fun Walk around Constitution Hill led by the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Fatima Chohan, the UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa, Nardos Bekele-Thomas and the Officer-in-Charge of UNHCR Regional Representation for Southern Africa, Adan Ilmi, accompanied by refugees and South

African school children, officials and civil society organizations. The Minister of Home Affairs, Malusi Gigaba, provided formal World Refugee Day remarks on behalf of the Government.

The World Refugee Day came into being following the UN General Assembly resolution 55/76 of 4 December 2000 in which it noted that 2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and that the Organization of African Unity had agreed to have International Refugee Day coincide with Africa Refugee Day on 20 June.

The theme for this year's events was "We stand #WithRefugees" which resonated through UNHCR's messaging and campaign materials. UNHCR's global public information and advocacy campaign #WithRefugees (<http://www.unhcr.org/refugeeday/>) will continue running until September this year when world leaders will gather at the UN Headquarters to agree on a new way of managing global refugee crises. This agreement, called Global Compact for Refugees, is all about sharing responsibility, bringing together all parts of society to stand together with refugees and do their fair share instead of leaving individual states to bear the burden of mass forced displacement.

The #WithRefugees campaign also supports the UN global "Together" initiative to promote respect and tolerance

for all people on the move. The campaign has a clear call to action that the public can sign on to online with each signature helping to demonstrate global support to refugees.

Photo captions: Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Fatima Chohan, the UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas and OIC of UNHCR Regional Representation for Southern Africa Mr. Adan Ilmi leading 5km World Refugee Day Fun Walk around Constitution Hill on 20 June. UNHCR/M. Aikomus

1. World Refugee Day keynote speaker Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Malusi Gigaba, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Fatima Chohan, the UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas and other distinguished guests enjoying the performance by the refugee dancers during the World Refugee Day event at Constitution Hill on 20 June. UNHCR/M. Aikomus
2. Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Hon. Fatima Chohan discussing with South African and refugee school children on the meaning of World Refugee Day after the 5km Fun Walk around Constitution Hill on 20 June. The UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas and OIC of UNHCR Regional Representation for Southern Africa Mr. Adan Ilmi look on. 

UNIC UN in South Africa joins centenary celebrations honoring the legacy of Mandela

By Zeenat Abdool

Centenary events to mark what would have been the late icon Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday took place across the globe with the United Nations in South Africa actively participating in a variety of activities in Mandela's home country.

The events began when UN representatives in South Africa joined more than 15,000 people from all walks of life and braced the winter chill at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on 17 July 2018 to watch former U.S. President Barack Obama deliver the 16th Annual Nelson Mandela Lecture.

The lecture, which was organized in partnership with the Motsepe Foundation, came a day before the Nelson Mandela International Day commemoration under the theme: "Renewing the Mandela Legacy and Promoting Active Citizenship in a Changing World." Obama's speech focused on rising inequalities, unemployment, poverty, women empowerment and the qualities and ethical values that leaders should embody to serve their citizens.

Addressing an active audience, he spoke at length about the true leadership characteristics of the late Nelson Mandela and his passion for human rights not only for the people of his country but for citizens of the world.

"Madiba's light shone so brightly, that in the late 70s, he could inspire (me) a college student on the other side of the world..."

– Barack Obama

UN agencies in the country marked the Nelson Mandela International Day by participating in a variety of events with the International Monetary Fund and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights coming together at the Southern Sun in Menlyn, Pretoria, to package food for the underprivileged. Other agencies, including the UN Information Centre, UN Development Programme, the World Food Programme and the office of the Resident Coordinator joined The Elders for a symbolic walk at the Constitution Hill in Johannesburg. The Elders is an independent group of global leaders working together for peace and human rights and came into being in 2007 through the efforts of former President Mandela.

UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa Nardos Bakele-Thomas was in

the forefront of the walk together with the late Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary-General, women and children rights advocate Graca Machel, former Irish President Mary Robinson and Sparks of Hope organizations who work for the freedoms to which Mandela dedicated his life.

The centenary events will continue throughout 2018 and include the eagerly anticipated Global Citizen festival which will take place in Johannesburg on 2 December 2018. The festival, which aims to raise awareness and inspire action towards ending extreme poverty, will see the likes of Beyonce, Jay-Z, Ed Sheeran and many other world-renowned artists performing at the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed is also expected to attend the festival.

People can sign up via <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/festival/south-africa/> to stand a chance to win tickets to the concert. To increase your chance of winning free tickets, users need to unleash their inner activist and join the many philanthropists, business leaders, politicians and others who have made a pledge or taken active steps to be part of the generation that realizes the dream of Mandela in ending extreme poverty, hunger and inequality. 🌍



From left to right: Ndileka Mandela, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in South Africa, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, UNDP Country Director in South Africa and Walid Badawi, UNDP Country Director South Africa.



From left to right: Johannesburg Mayor Herman Mashaba, UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Sir Richard Branson, Kofi Annan and Ms Graca Machel.

UNICEF Isibindi: Making opportunity real

By Sudeshan Reddy



Isibindi students

As one leaves the city of East London on South Africa's southern coast, the winding gravel road is a reminder of the large swathes of South Africa that are still rural and in which the challenges of rural poverty are real.

Near the top of a winding road is a small, neat house with a large yard belonging to 17-year-old Siphokazi Adams, "but I will be 18 soon," she declares. Tall and lean with an infectious and hearty laugh, it is hard to picture this young woman, who dropped out of school in 2013, as being in what she describes as a "dark space". The child of a domestic worker, Siphokazi admits to being exposed to unhealthy substances and grief following the death of her father.

It was during this time that Ncumisa, a child and youth care worker from the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW), approached her and encouraged her to visit the Safe Park. Ncumisa then made a point of visiting Siphokazi every day and successfully encouraged her to return to school and to reconcile with her estranged mother.

The care workers then arranged for Siphokazi to join the Young Reporters Network, an initiative funded by the United Nations Children's Fund

(UNICEF) that trains young people to use radio to report on issues affecting their communities.

"I think I was chosen because I am talkative," says Siphokazi as she describes how she acquired interviewing skills which boosted her confidence and the capacity to listen to other views.

Through regular counselling and advice, including the provision of study guides and homework assistance at the Safe Parks, Siphokazi is now back at school and completing Grade 12. Furthermore, she and her mother now have a much healthier relationship, thanks to the counselling skills of Ncumisa which she gained through Isibindi.

"Ncumisa encourages me," explains Siphokazi, "She comes to my door at 6am every single morning. She is my pillar of strength and my mother in so many ways."

Ncumisa says that she saw potential in this confident young woman, so she spoke to the principal of Siphokazi's school and convinced him that this was a student worth giving another chance. Promising his support, the principal also pledged to inform Ncumisa if Siphokazi failed to attend classes. The commitment has paid off and in 2017, this determined, former school drop-out plans to apply for university studies.

The result is that Siphokazi has "become more responsible and cares about her future", says Ncumisa. These days, Siphokazi volunteers at the nearby Safe Park where she teaches and helps organize concerts for the children at the park who have very few opportunities for entertainment. It's a role she clearly relishes as she describes the safe park as a space where "they don't shout, they are constructive, they show support and never judge."

For Siphokazi, Isibindi has had a strong impact on her life and her friends in high school who come to the Safe Park and have since been able to turn their lives around for the better.

As a child care worker in this economically impoverished community, Ncumisa sees the daily reality of young lives ruined by substance abuse, violence and poverty and plays her part, through the Isibindi programme, in preventing and mitigating their negative impact on children. She notes that "without Isibindi, many more children would suffer."

Showing off a UNICEF schoolbag she received three years ago and still continues to use, closes the little metal gate, saying she "really wants to thank UNICEF and the child care workers because I have gained so many skills and so much more. I would be nothing without Isibindi." 🌈



Nolusindiswe - Isibindi Making a difference

UNFPA Youth-led empowerment programme launched to reduce HIV/AIDS infections

By Ziyanda Ngoma

More than 1,500 enthusiastic children from schools in and around Umlazi township in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province joined the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) Thina Abantu Abasha Youth Leadership team for a fun-filled launch of the youth-led programme. “Thina Abantu Abasha” is Zulu for “We the youth” and is based on the premise that no action of empowering the youth should take place without the direct involvement of the youth.

Supported by the multinational company, Johnson & Johnson, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the peer-to-peer amplification programme was launched in the cricket grounds of Umlazi ComTech High School in Durban early this year. The DREAMS Thina Abantu Abasha programme is made up of six dynamic young people and aims to decrease the rate of HIV infections in three focus districts of eThekweni, uMgungundlovu and uMkhanyakude in KwaZulu-Natal. Later in the year it will be rolled out in two districts in Gauteng Province.

In between the lively artistic performances and music, the Youth Leadership Team talked about their goal to reach an estimated 150,000 young people through peer-to-peer engagement, focusing on empowering young people in leadership, employment and sexual and reproductive health—the three themes identified by youth as key empowerment drivers in preventing HIV/AIDS. Recognizing that adolescent girls and young women account for 74% of all new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa, the team told the audience that the programme is targeted at this



Johnson & Johnson delegation

demographic group between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

“As the Youth Leadership Team, we will work hard to ensure that our peers are not left behind,” Mbali Ngubane, a team member, told the audience. “We aim to ensure that those with leadership skills and potential are exposed to opportunities to develop them further and young people at risk and most vulnerable to HIV/Aids are empowered through comprehensive sexual reproductive health programmes,” he said.

Alma Scott, the head of Operations and Partnerships at Johnson & Johnson’s Global Public Health, thanked all stakeholders, especially the Youth Leadership Team, on the success of the programme.

“It has been a steep learning curve for the Youth Leadership Team and I am proud of their progress,” she said, adding, “The event today is 100% a result of their hard work, both by the DREAMS Thina Abantu Abasha and its partners in planning the event.” She

commended them for their passion in addressing the challenges facing their peers and taking it upon themselves to help find solutions.

Supporting the DREAMS Thina Abantu Abasha youth-led initiative, Gertrude Matshimane from the national Department of Health representing the “She Conquers” campaign, suggested that efforts to create synergy across all sectors and programmes working with young people to foster a targeted, and coordinated response must be intensified. She congratulated all those involved in the initiative, particularly the Youth Leadership Team, who through perseverance and commitment, made the launch of DREAMS Thina Abantu Abasha a success.

UNFPA displayed an exhibition stand at the venue stocked with informative and educational material on HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health and skills empowerment, which were promptly grabbed by the participants. 🌍

UNFPA Profile: Ms. Beatrice Mutali



Beatrice Mutali has assumed her duties as the new Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for South Africa and the Country Director for the eSwatini and Botswana country offices.

Ms. Mutali brings to the East and Southern Africa region more than 25 years of experience in international and local development, including experience in programme management, particularly around family planning and HIV/AIDS. Prior to her appointment in the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region, she served as the UNFPA deputy regional director at the West Africa Regional

Office and also as the Officer-In-Charge for UNFPA in Nigeria.

Before joining the UN system, Ms. Mutali previously served as the Family Planning director for Merck/MSD, Oss, Netherlands; head of the Africa team for the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, United Kingdom, and the director of programmes for International Planned Parenthood Foundation at the Africa Regional Office in Kenya.

She holds a Master of Arts degree in Economics and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the Kurukshetra University in Haryana, India. 🌍



In Memory of *Hannah Yilma* (31 May 1943 – 13 August 2018)

It is with great sadness that the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) announces the passing away of Hannah Yilma, who served as Director of UNIC Pretoria from 2000 to 2005.

Born in Ethiopia, Hannah Yilma retired in Pretoria after a UN career in both peacekeeping operations and communications.

She completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration from the Haile Selassie I University in Ethiopia and was employed in the private sector for 15 years. In 1991, Ms. Yilma joined the UN as an Information Officer in the Department of Public Information. She then served in two field missions: the UN

Protective Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia from 1994 to 1995, and the UN Observer Mission to South Africa (UNOMSA) from 1992-1994, as Civil Affairs Officer and Peace Observer, respectively.

Prior to her final posting in South Africa, she served as a Political Affairs Officer in the Situation Centre within the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations from 1995-1998 and then held the post of Associate Spokesman in the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General (at that time, Kofi Annan) from 1998 to 2000.

She retired as the Director of UNIC Pretoria in 2005 and chose to make Pretoria her new home. Hannah



remained actively involved in various capacities in non-governmental work, as well as in the diplomatic corps in South Africa. She left a lasting and meaningful legacy and the United Nations in South Africa salutes her remarkable life and service to the organization. 🌍

UN GAMES Zimbabwe wins the United Nations All Africa Games with South Africa as the runner-up

By Eunice Namugwe

The Zimbabwean team won this year's All Africa United Nations Games which ended on 1 September at Ingwenyama Conference and Sports Resort in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Zimbabwe won with 21 points from all sports disciplines combined, with South Africa following in second place with 18 points and Kenya in third place with 10 points.

For three consecutive years, United Nations staff based in Zimbabwe have been the reigning champions at the All Africa UN Games and this year was also voted as the team with the most outstanding team spirit. Zimbabwe put up an incredible performance at the soccer finals which saw South Sudan defeated at the penalties stage. Kenya won the tennis, golf and women swimming challenges.

The All Africa UN Games are held each year in any of the African countries. Mozambique will host the 2019 games; Lesotho hosted them last year. This year three UN resident coordinators attended the games, including the Resident Coordinator for Angola, Pier Paolo Balladelli, Resident Coordinator in Zimbabwe, Bishow Parajuli and the host country UN Resident Coordinator, Nardos Bekele-Thomas.

The games brought together hundreds of UN staff from across Africa who competed in 12 sports disciplines ranging from, among others, soccer and netball to golf, swimming, tennis, darts, snooker and chess and other fun games such as sack races and tugs-of-war.

The purpose of the UN Games is to promote a culture of peace and tolerance, mutual respect among staff and to emphasize the importance of UN's 'Delivering as One' approach. The UN recognizes the value of sports towards public health and as a tool for raising awareness on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The theme for this year's UN Games was derived from the SDG 3: "Promoting Good Health and Wellbeing in the UN".

The coordination and preparation for countries' participation was made possible by country captains of Angola, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, South Sudan, Namibia, eSwatini, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Lesotho, Nigeria and Kenya.

The 2018 All Africa UN Games were sponsored by UN Agencies and several organizations from both private and public sectors. 🌍

UN Wellness Promoting healthy lives for all

As part of its contribution towards promoting healthy lives among United Nations staff, the UN Wellness Working Group, in collaboration with the local UN Games Committee, organized a Wellness Day in preparation for the 2018 All Africa UN Games which were held in Mpumalanga Province in South Africa from 31 August to 1 September.

Addressing the staff at the Wellness Day, the Resident Coordinator, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, emphasized the need to ensure healthy lives and to promote the well-being of all people as is specified by Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 🌍





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