

# InFocus



A publication of UN in South Africa

Vol 6. Issue 2. December 2022



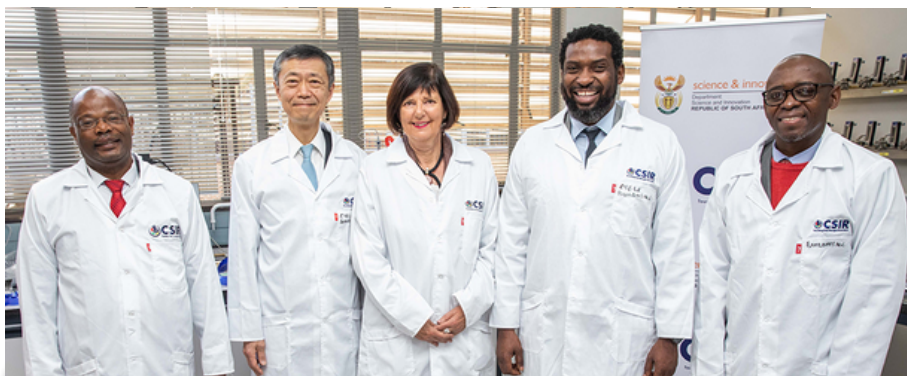
## UN SOUTH AFRICA "DELIVERING AS ONE"

Youth leaders identify barriers limiting progress of young people

Social media: making it easier for human traffickers to ensnare victims

SA adopts HIV prevention roadmap - emphasis on girls and young women

# CONTENTS



- 4 Social media makes it easy for human traffickers to ensnare victims
- 6 Minister calls for greater efforts to end AIDS
- 7 Youth leaders identify barriers to progress for young people

## Also in this issue...

- 3. Message from the Resident Coordinator
- 8. Alex FM remains on air after 2021 civil unrest
- 10. SA adopts HIV prevention roadmap, with emphasis on girls and young women
- 11. A human rights-based approach to basic income support in South Africa
- 12. KwaZulu-Natal floods: Building back better for every child
- 13. Public health experts focus on inequality, racism and funding
- 14. Community-led monitoring helps improve health services
- 15. ILO kicks off an ecosystems project for decent work
- 16. SA joins global efforts to end AIDS in children
- 17. Traditional leaders urged to play positive role to fight gender violence
- 18. Using sports to promote peaceful co-existence in the Western Cape Province
- 19. UNIDO and Japan provide equipment for the first biodegradation testing facility
- 20. Iconic school supports World Day Against Trafficking
- 21. Calls to fight corruption in South Africa get louder
- 23. UN Population Fund holds talks with Limpopo provincial authorities on social issues
- 24. UN Deputy Secretary-General delivers the Desmond Tutu International Peace Lecture
- 26. Government and the UN join hands to assist local government
- 28. KwaZulu-Natal Floods: UN assists victims of the flooding disaster
- 30. KwaZulu-Natal Floods: Meet the UN KZN volunteers
- 33. Meet the new Resident Coordinator

# INFOCUS

A magazine of the UN in South Africa  
Vol. 6. Issue 2. December 2022

**Publisher**  
UN Resident Coordinator

**Editorial Team**  
UNIC Pretoria

**Design**  
UNIC Pretoria

**Contacts:**  
The Editor, UNIC Pretoria  
Email: [unic-pretoria@un.org](mailto:unic-pretoria@un.org)  
Telephone: +27 12 354 8507  
Website: [www.southafrica.un.org](http://www.southafrica.un.org)

*InFocus* is published in English by the United Nations in South Africa. It's contents do not necessarily reflect the views of the UN. Articles may be freely reprinted. Copyrighted may not be reproduced.

Front cover: The My Body, My Health: My Wealth" Campaign by UNICEF South Africa





# Message from the Resident Coordinator



**Nelson Muffuh**  
UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa

## ***“Happy New Year Colleagues and Friends of the UN in South Africa,***

It's been a little over a month since my arrival in South Africa as the representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the role as the Resident Coordinator for the UN system in the country. In a short time, I have developed a deep sense of respect and admiration for the people of South Africa. I also am appreciating the country's diverse landscape, rich historical, cultural, political and religious heritage.

The last few weeks and the next few months ahead is about listening, learning and familiarizing myself with not only the plans but also the work undertaken, and results achieved by the UN. It's been a pleasure and an honour to engage with the UN Country Team and staff members. The UNCT shares my commitment to deepening our collaboration with the government, the people, and a range of stakeholders across all sectors of society and to strengthen existing relationships to achieve the results outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2025.

Our work delivered through the UNSDCF is inherently a collaborative and collective workplan between the UN, the Government of South Africa and partners to assist the country and its people in realizing the 2030 Development Agenda and the SDGs. The UN Reform compels us to find collective and collaborative approaches to supporting the government to enhance delivery as it deals with the stubborn triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment. There is no more critical a time than now to raise the dignity of the people in this country through empowering, impactful, and transformative programmes.

Like many in South Africa, I have keenly followed the socio-economic and political developments in the country. From the energy crisis to health challenges like COVID-19 and measles, to social discontent, corruption, and political tensions as well as to issues of violence and intolerance, we must use this moment to clarify and reinforce the value we bring in our collective support to South Africa. With a mere eight years left to deliver the 2030 Agenda and as we head towards the Summit of the Future, the Climate Summit as well as the SDGs Summit in September 2023, we must not give up on our quest for a sustainable and peaceful world in which people live in harmony with nature and safeguard the planet.

This edition of *InFocus* showcases some of our work in South Africa, ranging from responding to the floods in KwaZulu-Natal Province and other areas, to supporting programmes on gender-based violence, youth, among others. These highlights a fraction of the ongoing, high impact work the UN has undertaken in the country. I look forward to collectively building on this work to create greater impact. Through multistakeholder collaboration, whole-of-society approaches, and innovative approaches we can co-create people-centred and planet-sensitive solutions for South Africa. Here's to a successful 2023 for the UN Family which must include, without compromise, impactful change towards a South Africa where no one is left behind and in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Resident Coordinator's Office and the UNCT are open for business.

*Respectfully,*

**Nelson Muffuh** 



# Social media makes it easier for human traffickers to ensnare victims

*The internet has revolutionized human trafficking. It has presented recruiters with more convenient ways to connect with targeted victims, usually with fake job offers, or to find buyers for their products, such as human kidneys, and even to livestream acts of exploitation, writes Jane Marie Ongolo.*

Key to any human trafficking operation is the recruiter, often occupying a position of authority in the community. They may be the leader of the trafficking ring but are often just someone credible, even with significant religious or political standing.

Consider the documented case of a teacher from Lesotho who persuaded students to look for women most likely to accept employment “abroad”.

Five young women were duly introduced to the teacher who deceitfully briefed them on the available work and where it was – an offer they readily accepted. However, upon getting to the destination, in South Africa, they were promptly sold into sexual exploitation.

In another documented case, a Congolese recruiter promised the relatives of five children that they would get better education in Zambia. When a deal was finalized, the woman arranged for transportation to enter Zambia irregularly. On arrival, she put the five children to work in her business, selling commodities and food.

## Victims treated as commodities

The Southern Africa region is not free from human trafficking, a crime that entails the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. Traffickers of human beings treat their victims as commodities that can be used and sold for financial gain, without regard for human dignity and rights.

Essentially, traffickers can be divided into two broad categories: organized criminal groups; and opportunistic traffickers operating alone or in cooperation with one or more traffickers. The latter category includes business owners, intimate partners and other family members.

Whatever the organizational structure, traffickers usually target the most marginalized and vulnerable people, such as undocumented migrants and those with mental disorders, along with people living in poverty, the unemployed, and

abandoned children and those in dysfunctional families. In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region cases have been reported of people with albinism being trafficked for their organs.

Trafficking can involve travelling to another country, but most victims of trafficking are citizens of the countries where they are detected. They are typically subject to significant geographical movements, often to unfamiliar parts of their country or region where a different language is spoken.



## A more convenient way to target victims

While the scenario of an influential community member doubling up as a recruiter is still a reality, the internet has revolutionized human trafficking. It has presented recruiters with more convenient ways to connect with targeted victims, usually with fake job offers, or to find buyers for their products, such as human kidneys, and even to livestream acts of exploitation.

Through the internet it is also possible to anonymously arrange logistics such as transport and accommodation for victims, in addition to moving and hiding proceeds of crime. In the recruitment phase for human trafficking, two types of strategies can be identified. ‘Hunting’ is when traffickers proactively target specific victims or clients in order to gain access to victims



and establish connections with potential buyers or exploitative services. ‘Fishing’ involves human traffickers posting adverts online and waiting for potential victims to respond. They may use fake job adverts or offer to buy certain services.

Thus, it is critical that guardians and educators teach children how to navigate the internet safely. Social media poses a significant danger, not least because it is now such an indispensable part of life, with WhatsApp and Facebook among the most popular channels.

It is concerning that a third of children who participated in a 2020 child survey (conducted by the Youth Research Unit at the Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa (UNISA) and UNICEF) had met someone face-to-face during the previous year whom they had first got to know on the internet. The last time they met the person face-to-face, they experienced feelings of happiness (58,8%) and excitement (43,7%).

Globally, 50% of detected human victims of human trafficking were for sexual exploitation and 38% for forced labour, while 6% were subjected to forced criminal activity and more than 1% to begging. Smaller numbers were trafficked for forced marriages, organ removals and other purposes.

This is in contrast to the situation in the SADC where the majority of detected victims of human trafficking are exploited for the purpose of forced labour. They are put out to work, such as selling goods in markets, begging and labouring on farms, quarries and in mines.

Victims of human trafficking are invariably kept against their will by the threat of physical violence. In other instances, victims are prevented from fleeing because they have been forcibly introduced to drugs or have been deceived into believing that they owe the traffickers huge amounts of money for services provided, such as the provision of a false ID, transportation or housing. [\(Continued on next page\)](#)



(Continued from previous page)

Research by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and others shows that globally the share of children among detected trafficking victims has tripled, while the share of boys has increased five times over the past 15 years. However, women and girls are still the primary target of trafficking globally, making up 46% and 19% of all victims of trafficking respectively.

“Loverboy” cases have also been reported in the SADC region. This is where male traffickers romance potential female victims for months and even years, building a relationship of trust, before trafficking them into sexual exploitation or forced labour.

The number of trafficking cases recorded in the SADC region fell between 2017 and 2020, likely due to greater efforts to defeat human trafficking. More countries have developed specific laws prohibiting such crimes after ratifying the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Trafficking Protocol).

As of August 2020, 169 countries had enacted legislation that criminalizes trafficking in persons, in line with the protocol. Across the world the average conviction rate tripled since 2003 when the Protocol entered into force, although convictions have been lowest in sub-Saharan Africa.



Between 2017 and 2020, 484 cases of trafficking in persons were recorded in the SADC Regional Trafficking in Persons Database, set up in 2014 by member states, the SADC Secretariat and the UNODC. There were 212 cases from nine SADC member states in 2017 – 130 of them were registered in South Africa alone. In 2018, 151 cases were registered in 11 SADC countries, with the number falling in 2019 to 55 cases from eight member states, and rising again in 2020 to 66 cases from eight member states.

### Conviction rate has tripled

Between 2017 and 2020, 484 cases of trafficking in persons were recorded in the SADC Regional Trafficking in Persons Database, set up in 2014 by member states, the SADC Secretariat and the UNODC. There were 212 cases from nine SADC member states in 2017 – 130 of them were registered in South Africa alone. In 2018, 151 cases were registered in 11 SADC countries, with the number falling in 2019 to 55 cases from eight member states, and rising again in 2020 to 66 cases from eight member states.

Detection is particularly difficult and, even where suspects have been identified, building up a case for prosecution is a process fraught with technicalities. It doesn't help that human trafficking is often conflated with people smuggling and irregular migration, leading to further complications.

Working with other UN agencies, development partners and member states, UNODC is supporting member states with

training meant to boost detention and prosecution, along with assistance for victims. Just as important is awareness raising and ongoing data collection to support evidence-based programming.

In the words of one stakeholder, the human trafficking cases they encountered happened by coincidence and not because of targeted efforts. Hence the aim of efforts underway is to ensure that detection and prosecution happen by design rather than by accident.

### About the Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) project.

The SAMM project is funded by the European Union and is a collaboration between four UN agencies: the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNODC, under the one-UN model. The overall objective is to improve migration management in the Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region. <https://www.sammproject.org/>

Jane Marie Ongolo is the Southern Africa Regional Resident Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

# Minister calls for greater efforts to end AIDS



South Africa Minister of Health, Dr. Joe Phaala

South Africa has recommitted to ending the AIDS epidemic as a threat to public health by 2030 and has joined new initiatives to end AIDS in children and boost HIV prevention.

The pledges came as UNAIDS released the [Global AIDS Update](#) in July 2022, warning that the global AIDS response was in danger. The report noted that progress on HIV prevention has faltered, with the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian crises widening inequalities and pushing the HIV response further off track. Progress has stalled, resources have shrunk, and millions of lives are at risk as a result.


To save lives, get on track to end AIDS, and protect global health security, UNAIDS said a dramatic acceleration is needed, yet progress in reducing the number of people newly infected with HIV has actually slowed worldwide.

There were 1.5 million new HIV infections worldwide last year – 4,000 per day – which was 1 million higher than the 2025 target. UNAIDS delivered the sobering news that the number of new infections dropped only 3.6% between 2020 and 2021, the smallest annual decline in new HIV infections since 2016. In addition, UNAIDS data shows the AIDS pandemic took a life every minute, on average, in 2021, with 650,000 AIDS deaths despite effective HIV treatment and tools to prevent, detect, and treat opportunistic infections.

The new data was released just ahead of the International AIDS Conference in Montreal, Canada, where South Africa Minister of Health, Dr. Joe Phaala, led a delegation including deputy ministers, civil society leaders, and representatives of people living with HIV.

“The COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian crises have widened inequalities and are pushing the HIV response further off track,” Dr. Phaala told the conference. He said that HIV prevention remains South Africa’s biggest challenge and promised to expand existing prevention tools with a particular focus on adolescent girls and young women and key populations.

“An intensified focus on HIV prevention is a priority for our country,” Dr. Phaala said. “Reaching our national targets for reducing HIV is unthinkable without prioritizing adolescent girls and young women,” he said because that group accounts for almost a third of all new HIV infections in the country.

The conference included several significant initiatives that will be felt in South Africa, and these were explored in a follow-up webinar in early August for stakeholders across the Eastern and Southern Africa region. 

## UNAIDS Global AIDS Update 2022

IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER  
IN DANGER

### Global HIV & AIDS statistics Fact sheet

- **38.4 million [33.9 million–43.8 million] people globally were living with HIV in 2021.**
- **1.5 million [1.1 million–2.0 million] people became newly infected with HIV in 2021.**
- **650 000 [510 000–860 000] people died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2021.**
- **In sub-Saharan Africa, six in seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15–19 years are among girls. Girls and young women aged 15–24 years are twice as likely to be living with HIV than young men.**
- **In sub-Saharan Africa, women and girls accounted for 63% of all new HIV infections in 2021**
- **Every week, around 4900 young women aged 15–24 years become infected with HIV.**



# Youth leaders identify barriers limiting progress of young people



Youth leaders commemorate International Youth Day 2022 with the UN

In celebrating the International Youth Day 2022, which is commemorated annually on 12 August, the United Nations Youth Theme Group hosted a hybrid webinar on the theme: “Inter-generational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages”. Participants at the event in Pretoria, representing youth networks, honored the day by raising awareness about barriers to inter-generational solidarity, notably ageism, which impacts young and old persons and has detrimental effects on society.

International Youth Day provides an opportunity to celebrate young people’s views and initiatives on a global scale. The day is intended to highlight and bring to the fore the voices, actions, and initiatives of young people. Most importantly, it strengthens young people’s universal, meaningful, and equitable engagement in society.

The panel of young leaders at the Youth Day event consisted of dynamic trailblazers from diverse sectors and organizations. This enabled a panoramic and inter-generational exchange of ideas focused on barriers to youth reaching their full potential. The audience listened to recommendations and solutions on creating a world for all ages.

It was noted that young people face multiple vulnerabilities, including age-related barriers in various spheres of their lives including employment, political participation, access to age-appropriate health services, and justice systems. On an individual level, these obstacles can have a severe impact on the well-being and livelihoods of young people that extends into adulthood. On a societal level, ageism prevents us from thinking and designing policies and social services that reflect the course of people’s lives with fairness at all ages.



UN Youth Theme Group Co-Chairs: UNICEF Representative, Christine Muhigana and UNFPA Representative, Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi

“It is important to form collaborations and form inter-generational partnerships to commit to the youth agenda and make the right investments to leverage the potential of all generations,” noted UNFPA Representative and UN Youth Theme Group co-chair, Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi.

The need, therefore, is to collaborate and form inter-generational partnerships that are important to leverage the full potential of all generations, he said.

UNICEF Representative and co-chair of the UN Youth Theme Group, Christine Muhigana, reiterated that the UN remains committed to advancing the youth development agenda and striving to create thought leadership on youth inclusion.

In concluding remarks, there was a consensus that inter-generational solidarity strengthens social connectedness, and allows for a life course approach to be adopted in thinking and in the design of policies to ensure no one is left behind as a result of their age. 🌍



# Despite attacks suffered during the 2021 unrest, Alex FM continues to broadcast



Takalani Nemangowe, Station Manager at Alex FM Community Radio Station (UNICEF South Africa/2022/Matangira)

Restoring peace and fostering social cohesion in communities that were affected by the devastating unrest in July last year was a key component of the work carried out by the Children's Radio Foundation's Peacebuilding Dialogues, with support from UNICEF South Africa. One year later, a visit back to one of the radio stations that participated in the dialogues found much that had changed.

"They came in and stole from themselves," says Takalani Nemangowe, the Station Manager at Alex FM community radio station. Takalani talked about the events that resulted in the station being one of the casualties of the riots that shook KwaZulu-Natal Province and parts of Gauteng in July 2021.

In the early hours of 13 July 2021, a day after widespread looting started in the township, an unknown number of people broke into the radio station, located in the heart of Alexandra's business and transport hub, and looted virtually everything. Not one item was ever recovered.

"I was very disappointed because Alex FM employs 52 young people from the community, and I saw the futures of these young people shattered. The very same community that Alex FM gives a voice to, silenced that voice."

Alex FM is one of the oldest community radio stations in South Africa. Its first broadcast went live in late 1994, just after the country transitioned into a democratic state. For three decades, it has served its community and its surrounds, becoming a source of information to its 280,000 listeners while also being a youth training and development institute for many young people.

Thembi Ndlovu, a regular listener who has lived in Alexandra since 1989, attests to the impact the station has on the community which she describes as a source of hope and light to the notoriously troubled township. She says it often goes beyond the call of duty to bring key



Loyal Alex FM listener, Thembi Ndlovu, next to her radio

information and help that directly benefits residents and giving back to those most in need.

"I love Alex FM with all my heart. I listen to every single show," says Ms. Ndlovu. "They have so much respect for their community. To anyone who ever again would think of doing what they did to Alex FM last year, I would tell them not to do it, because Alex FM is ours. It works for us. They benefit us."

[\(Continued on next page\)](#)



Continued from previous page

During COVID-19, they were there for us. When we're in distress, they're there for us. They love us and we love them."

This mutual appreciation and respect relationship between the station and most of the community was demonstrated after the riots when residents came together to give whatever they could – big and small – to help rebuild the station and get it back on air.

Ms. Ndlovu says her desire is to see Alex FM growing from strength to strength and for the community to protect it so that the youth of today and future generations can continue to be positively impacted by its work.

Tragically, all the station's historical archives dating back to its infancy were lost forever, but despite this, the station was able to rebuild and come back stronger and undeterred, says Nemangowe. Generous donations enabled the station to get back on its feet quickly and buy new and better equipment so the station FM could continue broadcasting.



UNICEF South Africa, through its long-standing partner, the Children's Radio Foundation, assisted young broadcasters at Alex FM to play an active role in bringing their peers and communities back together through a series of Peacebuilding Dialogues, which were produced into a three-part podcast.

The episodes were produced following facilitated sessions with nearly 300 young people and community members from across eight provinces. The discussions and related broadcasts provided a platform for youth to express themselves, share opinions and solutions, as they coped with the mental health and broader impacts of the unrest.

Young people from Alex FM were trained to facilitate the dialogues on the unrest through weekly radio slots and WhatsApp and in-person engagements with the community.

"We are grateful to UNICEF South Africa and Children's Radio Foundation and all others who stood up to assist us in any way they could," says Nemangowe.

UNICEF South Africa's role in this process is part of a broader effort to support community dialogues and continue to focus on a whole-of-society approach to fostering an environment that is safer and more conducive for children and young people. 🌍



Donations enabled Alex FM to replace the looted equipment and continue broadcasting. (UNICEF South Africa /2022 /Matangira)

# SA adopts HIV prevention roadmap, with emphasis on girls and young women



Eva Kiwango, UNAIDS Country Director for South Africa



Delegates at the South African National AIDS Conference 2022

Every two minutes, a girl or young woman was newly infected with HIV last year, worldwide. In South Africa, adolescent girls and young women aged 15-24 years account for 11% of the adult population but acquired more than 30% of all new HIV infections.

With this context, South Africa joined several other countries and organizations to launch the Global HIV Prevention Roadmap to 2025, during the International AIDS Conference in August. The roadmap calls for 10 transformative actions by governments and communities to jointly follow the science, end inequalities in access, push for accountable leadership, and implement at scale. UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem said HIV prevention is lagging. "With 2030 on the horizon, this is no time for half measures."

Health Minister Dr. Joe Phaala told the conference that a priority for South Africa is to ensure that all vulnerable persons, particularly young people, have prevention methods available that work for them. He noted that in June, the country launched a new National Youth HIV Prevention Campaign 2022–2025, focused on 9.6 million young people aged 15–24 years, in and out of school, including 700,000 living with HIV.

South Africa is currently developing its 5th National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs, which will prioritize critical programmatic, policy, legal and societal enablers for scaling up primary prevention.

New research shows that injectable PrEP is among the most effective tools for preventing HIV available and that it works well in multiple populations.

However, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner noted that prevention and treatment services aren't equitable, and new innovations aren't always reaching those in need. "Scientific progress is not enough without equitable access to health technologies," he said.

Activists at the conference, including from South Africa, made strong calls for improved access and pricing for prevention technologies including the dapivirine vaginal ring. Drug maker ViiV announced that it would allow generics manufacturers to reproduce the long-acting

injectable prevention drug cabotegravir for 90 countries, with not-for-profit pricing for public programmes in low-income and least-developed countries including all sub-Saharan African countries.

The new drug was on trial in South Africa and is especially useful for women, trans women and for people facing social and structural barriers to accessing oral PrEP.

However, UNAIDS and others have called for the drug to be immediately available at low cost and in more low- and middle-income countries. "Until everyone has access to the best that science has to offer, until everyone has their human rights, we will never end this or any future pandemics," said Winnie Byanyima, the UNAIDS Executive Director.

**“ We need to make this real at a local level. To end AIDS, we must end the inequalities in access and deliver prevention outcomes at scale so that everyone, everywhere can access the tools that work for them! ”**

*UNAIDS Country Director for South Africa, Eva Kiwango.*

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Executive Director Peter Sands said “we should be embarrassed” by the low uptake of oral PrEP – a proven prevention drug that has been available for a decade but is currently only reaching 3 million people. Stigma and discrimination, and the marginalization of people at risk of HIV infection, are among the causes of the low uptake. He noted that we cannot end the HIV prevention crisis with only biomedical solutions; we must mobilize political leaders to address the underlying structural barriers that make people vulnerable to HIV infection.

For the prevention roadmap and the global alliance to succeed, communities should be involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes, said UNAIDS Country Director for South Africa, Eva Kiwango. “We need to make this real at a local level,” she said. “To end AIDS, we must end the inequalities in access and deliver prevention outcomes at scale so that everyone, everywhere can access the tools that work for them!”



# A Human Rights-based Approach to Basic Income Support in South Africa

“

It is not hyperbole to say that unless governments increase benefits and wages in line with inflation **lives will be lost.**”

”

**OLIVIER DE SCHUTTER**

UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights



The United Nations and its partners held a roundtable discussion in July to consider a human rights-based approach to basic income support in South Africa. The event was organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Office for Southern Africa together with key participants from the government, the civil society and academia.

The roundtable was intended to support follow-up to recommendations made by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) to South Africa, which included the design of a composite index on the cost of living; ensuring that those between the ages of 18 and 59 with little or no income have access to social assistance; and the need to consider introducing a universal basic income grant.

The discussions also formed part of a joint programme between OHCHR, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF and UN Women. The joint programme seeks to ensure no one is excluded from benefiting from current social protection programmes and an agreement for a comprehensive system that leaves no one behind.

South Africa has high levels of poverty and unemployment and has been ranked by the World Bank as the most unequal country in the world. These concerns have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the related lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 when millions were left with no income or means of support.

This prompted the government to increase existing social grants such as the Temporary Employee/Employer Relief Scheme and the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant. The latter pays 350 rand (about US\$20) per month to unemployed persons who do not receive any other social grant or unemployment insurance fund payment. The government recently extended the COVID-19 grant to March 2023.

With an employment rate of 33.9%, many experts believe South Africa requires a permanent and sustainable mechanism to support the unemployed who are between the ages of 18 and 59 with no access to social protection.

In her welcoming remarks at the roundtable, Abigail Noko, the OHCHR's Regional Representative for Southern Africa, noted that social protection was a pressing issue in South Africa, considering the decisions the government will have to make on the COVID-19 SRD grant. She said the devastating impact of COVID-19 in South Africa and globally, deepening inequality, food insecurity, unemployment and poverty have shown that even basic income support can make a difference in people's lives and livelihoods.

Professor Olivier de Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on

extreme poverty and human rights, urged participants to think of social protection as a human right to social security. This means the relationship between the government and the beneficiaries of social assistance was not one of charity, but a duty-bearer's obligation and a claim that rights-holders can make.

The special rapporteur stressed that budgets should not be prioritized at the expense of rights protection. Rather, social protection should be seen as an investment in human capital that can deliver very important medium and long-term benefits to all of society. Ms. De Schutter underscored that, “it is the duty of the state to mobilize enough resources in order to make the right to social security a reality for all individuals, and that is the best investment a state can make for inclusive and sustainable growth.


Professor Sandra Liebenberg, the H.F. Oppenheimer Chair in Human Rights Law and Distinguished Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Stellenbosch, noted that the South Africa's Constitutional Court has linked the right to social security to the underlying values of human dignity, equality and freedom, Ubuntu, racial and gender equality, and social justice.

She added that the Constitution imposes a positive duty on the State to take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to achieve the progressive realization of this right. This implies that government does not have a policy choice not to adopt proactive measures of social security but must do so as a matter of legal obligation. As held by the Court, “The purpose of social security is to ensure that everyone, including the most vulnerable members of our society, enjoy access to basic necessities and can live a life of dignity.”

Redha Ameur, ILO's Regional Specialist, explained that social protection is anchored in human rights standards at all levels at the ILO. The organization's mandate has always included social protection, going as far back as the ILO Convention of 1919. The Declaration of Philadelphia affirms that, “poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere” as part of the fundamental principles on which the organisation is based.

Mr. Ameur explained that ILO Recommendation No. 202 (2012) provides important guidance and principles regarding coverage, adequacy, and financing for basic income. Basic income support is not at odds with social protection floors as it echoes the requirements in Recommendation No. 202, and also reflected in Sustainable Development Goals Targets 1.3 and 3.8. The recommendation urges States to guarantee that, at a minimum that, over the human life cycle, “all in need have access to essential health care and to basic income security.”

Participants at the roundtable discussed the need for a basic income grant in South Africa and its relationship with human rights in adopting a universal or targeted approach. They also discussed options to develop a composite index on the cost of living in South Africa as part of realizing the right to adequate living standards.

The roundtable highlighted the value and contribution of a human rights approach as enshrined in the country's constitution and made recommendations for action. OHCHR will continue to support the government on this issue as it prepares to submit its report to CESCR in 2023. 

# KwaZulu-Natal floods: building back better for every child



Destruction by KZN floods (UNICEF South Africa/2022/Matangira)

***In the wake of the devastating floods, UNICEF and partners are providing affected children and families with immediate relief and psychosocial support.***

“Water flooded in through the door here, so we had to break the small window in our bedroom to escape and go to our neighbours who are further down from here,” says 21-year-old Lungelo Sogoni. As she talks, she points out the shoulder-height watermark against the plywood wall of her shack with one arm, while holding her 7-months-old baby, Enkosi, on her hip with the other.

Lungelo is trying to rebuild her life, one month after the devastating floods that hit parts of Durban in South Africa’s KwaZulu-Natal province. She lives in Dakota informal settlement in the south of the city.

“It’s been really tough. Everything has been damaged. We haven’t had water to drink and what was left behind is covered in mud,” she says.

The floods wreaked havoc between in April and claimed more than 430 lives – including 67 children – some 40,000 people remain in community halls and shelters after their homes were washed away. As the waters receded, amongst the debris, death, and destruction a wake of trauma has been left behind and survivors – some of whom are still searching for the bodies of their loved ones – urgently need support.

A few hundred meters from Lungelo’s home is the three-roomed shack belonging to Lufuno Shezi, her disabled father and disabled brother, and her child.

Their home was damaged during the floods and they had to seek shelter elsewhere while they waited for the water level to subside.

Multi-purpose cash grants and psychosocial interventions constitute a significant part of UNICEF South Africa’s response to the crisis. With a partner, Refugee Social Services (RSS), families who have lost everything are provided with cash to cover their immediate needs.



***Lufuno Shezi (24) from Isiphingo, South of Durban, one of the flood victims who received assistance in the form of cash vouchers from UNICEF and Refugee Social Services. (UNICEF South Africa /2022/Matangira)***

“I was able to buy a stove and kettle, as well as food for us all with the voucher I received,” says Lufuno Shezi.

“The money meant that I could at least buy oil, rice and pap (maize meal),” says Honeyck Kandayah, a 34-year-old Malawian who has lived in Isiphingo for four years. “I had to save my life over the things I have,” she adds, looking up towards the hill that he clambered up to escape the raging waters.

“The water came so fast, we just had to run. I’ve lost all my documents and now I’ve also lost my job because my company was also damaged by the floods and had to let some of us go,” says Honeyck.

Honeyck’s phone was also lost in the floods which meant that he couldn’t use e-Wallet to receive the relief cash grants. “We had to quickly change direction to use physical vouchers to ensure that survivors received immediate assistance and could provide a meal for their children,” explains Yasmeen Rajah, the Director of Refugee Social Services. To date, 127 cash grants have been distributed to affected families.

While UNICEF’s partners on the ground continue to monitor the needs of children and families affected by the floods, ensuring that sustained support in helping affected communities to pick up the pieces and build back better is an urgent priority.

Support our flood relief efforts #ForEveryChild. 



# Public health experts focus on inequalities, racism and funding



Winnie Byanyima, UNAIDS Executive Director (5th from right) and Minister of Health, Dr. Joe Phaala (5th from left) and other delegates at the International AIDS Conference 2022 in Montreal, Canada

Delegates to the International AIDS Conference in early August said they experienced trauma and pain from testimonies heard during a session on anti-racism and decolonising the AIDS response, but they also felt empowered by shared experiences, the energy and determination of the speakers, and the public support expressed on social media.

Delegates noted the difficulties experienced by people traveling from countries in the global South, with many being denied visas. One session on stigma in healthcare settings was left voiceless, after all of the speakers were denied visas.

Prof. Madhukar Pai, Canada Research Chair of Epidemiology and Global Health at McGill University, said, global health was neither diverse nor global even before the pandemic, “but now, there is a real risk that all global health events will start resembling Davos—elite, white people getting together in North American or European cities, to discuss issues that mostly impact black and brown people in low- and middle-income countries. There is a big risk that people in the global South will be left behind, or left trying to join hybrid events via unreliable internet connections.” Prof. Pai called for people to work together to support global south colleagues as they assert themselves in public health. Shortly after, Dr. Pai published a commentary on the topic.

UNAIDS Executive Director Winnie Byanyima, described systemic racism as a global emergency and called for efforts to tackle it with urgency, by putting power in the hands of those who experience racism. “Overcoming racism is a hard battle. What does it take? Honesty. Courage. Empathy,” she said.

The World Health Organization Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said access to life-saving prevention tools, testing and treatment – whether for HIV, COVID-19 or monkeypox – too often relies on chance: “your birthplace, skin colour, gender, how much you earn,” he said. “Health shouldn’t be a privilege, it’s a human right.”

Vuyiseka Dubula, the Director of Stellenbosch University’s Africa Centre for HIV/AIDS Management, said the world cannot end AIDS without interrogating the systems of oppression, power, and privilege that sustain the structural drivers in the HIV response. Racism is at the centre. Poor black women have been carrying the burden of this epidemic,” she said.

**“ Systemic racism as a global emergency that must be tackled with urgency, by putting power in the hands of those who experience racism. Overcoming racism is a hard battle, ”**  
Winnie Byanyima.

“How the money is spent and whether it reaches communities is affected by racism. Black communities should be central to the response, she said. “We are the expertise!” Dr. Dubula also added funding systems must change “because the systems of oppression start there.”

Sustainable funding was top of the mind for UNAIDS and the Global Fund, which are both seeking urgent support. The Global Fund is trying to raise US\$18 billion this year for its 7th replenishment. “Let’s be real: what this really takes is money,” said Peter Sands. “We’ll never reach our prevention targets without adequate resourcing.” Underscoring this, the head of the U.S President’s Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Dr. John N. Nkengasong, noted that “HIV is not a pandemic of yesterday; it is a pandemic of today.” South Africa’s Health Minister, Dr. Joe Phaala, said his country would ensure sufficient investments in HIV prevention, sustainable financing, and improvements in allocative efficiency.

“The South African Government is committed to provide domestic funding to support financing transitions of pilots and evaluations of biomedical interventions such as PrEP based interventions, as well as engaging in sensitisation for health care workers and implementers to provide services for key populations among others. We are committed to build resilient health and HIV systems to respond to pandemics and protect the gains we have made.”

UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director Matt Kavanagh called for funding of community organizations to help build community infrastructure to fight pandemics. “Where this has been done, it has shown how remarkable the resilience has been,” he said.

In closing remarks, Ms. Byanyima said: “Thanks to the dedication of thousands of scientists around the world, the determined organizing of civil society groups, and the support of key policy makers, the issues lifted up at AIDS2022 could enable a turning point in the global AIDS response.”

# Community-led monitoring helps improve health services

An innovative project led by community members is helping communities to advocate for improved health services across South Africa.



A group of five organizations of people living with HIV has been monitoring and reporting on HIV and TB services at public clinics across South Africa, with some of their findings indicating major shortcomings. Contracted through UNAIDS and funded by United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Project Ritshidze (“saving our lives” in Venda) has inspected 400 healthcare facilities across 27 districts. The focus has been to gather evidence on service levels, propose ways to address problems, and use the information for local and national advocacy.

Ritshidze reports indicate there are many barriers to ending the AIDS epidemic, including claims of inhumane treatment by health workers for members of ‘key populations’ including sex workers, gay and other men who have sex with men, and people who inject drugs.

South Africa has the world’s largest national HIV treatment programme, but also the largest number of people dropping out of treatment or not even commencing treatment after being diagnosed. Ritshidze has collected evidence that many people are giving up after waiting in seemingly endless lines for simple tasks such as getting refills of their prescribed HIV treatment, only to face discrimination and hostility, health workers who cannot locate their files or to be told that critical medicines and commodities are out of stock.

One sex worker described how a judgmental health worker refused to give her HIV prevention tools. She later acquired HIV from a client, which means she will need lifelong antiretroviral treatment. However, she is afraid to return to the clinic for free medicine, due to the hostility she experienced. “As a sex worker, I am treated terribly at the clinic. They shout at me for getting STIs. They don’t want to treat me,” she said.

Ritshidze monitors typically live in the communities they are observing. They have reported on cases of teenage girls being reprimanded by clinic staff for requesting condoms or other tools to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Adolescent girls and young women are the group most heavily affected by new HIV infections in South Africa. Ritshidze’s findings suggest many reasons why prevention tools and approaches developed for young people are being under-utilized, including stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings, limited opening hours, low staff capacity, few facilities tailored to the needs of young people, and a lack of knowledge among young people and some service providers also.

By end of June 2022, Ritshidze community monitors had conducted nearly 37,000 patient interviews, of which 70% are people living with HIV. They also talked to healthcare workers and members of key populations. The evidence they collected is helping to drive grassroots action to overcome

these barriers and it is reaching staff and managers responsible for health service delivery. The results have been used in feedback meetings with facility managers, Department of Health officials, and decision-makers at the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), resulting in clear improvements in healthcare delivery.

“Before Ritshidze, people would go to the clinic and wait for the whole day – and there was no way to address it, no one would do anything to fix it,” says Sibongile Tshabalala, Chairperson of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) which is part of Ritshidze. “We were individuals complaining, and easily dismissed.”

However, that has now changed: “Ritshidze has empowered us to identify these systemic problems, bring the data to duty-bearers, and present solutions while holding them accountable to the community for making the necessary changes,” Tshabalala says. “We’re already seeing improvements. Clinic waiting times have dropped an average of 33% since our monitoring began, and multi-month dispensing of HIV treatment has increased from only 18% to 33%.”

Ritshidze also made inputs to advocacy for international donor support, including from PEPFAR via the “People’s COP”, and has generated the State of Healthcare for Key Populations report, which found that 20% of all members of key populations in South Africa were not receiving any HIV services at all, with significant numbers being refused access.

Ritshidze has also developed tools such as a data dashboard that is now being used by activists in several other countries to build their own community-led monitoring systems. Ritshidze has been recognized by the government as an integral part of its Operation Phuthuma (“Hurry” in Zulu) which is directed at improving HIV programmes and accelerating the achievement of critical targets in the AIDS response.

As the community-led monitoring approach is being adopted by more countries, especially following the publication of UNAIDS guidance, Ritshidze has proactively shared its knowledge as a good practice with many countries in the region and beyond.

“These results are testimony to the potential for communities to determine their own health needs and to advocate effectively for them,” said UNAIDS Country Director Eva Kiwango. “The Global AIDS Strategy emphasizes the importance of communities being at the centre of the response to HIV and TB. Communities are best placed to understand their own challenges and identify, develop, implement, and coordinate solutions. Ritshidze has provided ample evidence that community leadership and engagement is both effective and essential,” she added. 🌍



# ILO kicks off an ecosystems project for decent work



Officials at the launch of the Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work Project at a high-level ceremony at Freedom Park in Pretoria



Early this year, the International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work Project at a high-level ceremony attended by the South African Minister of Employment and Labour, Thulas Nxesi, and the Swiss Federal Councillor, Guy Parmelin, at the Freedom Park in Pretoria. Switzerland, along with Norway, is financing the project with ILO as the implementing agency.

The aim of the project is to address productivity and decent work deficits across policy, sector, and enterprise levels in South Africa while ensuring that productivity gains are distributed equitably between employers and workers through effective social dialogue.

The successful launch of the project was further highlighted by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between Minister Nxesi and Councillor Parmelin. The intention of the MOU is to establish high-level tripartite dialogue on labour and employment issues, including facilitating technical exchanges between the two countries.

Joni Musabayana, the Director of the ILO's Decent Work Team in South Africa, presided over a panel discussion at the launch, made up of the Chief Executive Officer of Productivity South Africa, Mothunye Mothiba; the CEO of Business Unity South Africa, Cas Coovadia; Babs Nhlapo from Organised Labour; and the Head of Economic Cooperation and Development at the Swiss Embassy, Franziska Spörri.

The discussions highlighted some of the challenges and opportunities the South African labour market faces. Discussant groups of technical experts addressed issues that included the Role of Government in Productivity Development; Doing Business in South Africa; Entrepreneurship and Skills Development; Global Value Chains; Responsible Business Conduct; the Role of Social Partners in Productivity Development; Science, Research and Innovation; and Township and Local Economies.

Mr. Musabayana emphasised the unanimous observations made by the panelists that South Africa suffers from unusually high levels of poverty and inequality and that any concerted efforts to boost productivity would be a welcome contribution to the overall national development effort. 🌍



Minister Thulas Nxesi and the Swiss Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin at the signing event



# SA joins global efforts to end AIDS in children

**Globally, 52% of children living with HIV are on life-saving treatment. In South Africa, only 48% of the 270,000 children aged 0-14 years living with HIV received antiretroviral treatment last year, compared to 75% of adults aged 15 and above.**



During the International AIDS Conference in early August, UNAIDS, UNICEF, and WHO launched the Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children, with support from the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. South Africa and 11 other African countries were the first to join. Opening the launch event, Linda Gail Bekker, the Director of the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre at the University of Cape Town, said: "It's time for us finally to end AIDS for children."

The commitments made by African leaders and international partners at the event could, if followed through, ensure that every child living with HIV is on antiretroviral medicine, and that no more children are infected with HIV.

Globally, 52% of children living with HIV are on life-saving treatment. In South Africa, only 48% of the 270,000 children aged 0-14 years living with HIV received antiretroviral treatment last year, compared to 75% of adults aged 15 and above.

"Despite progress to reduce vertical transmission, increase testing and treatment, and expand access to information, children around the world are still far less likely than adults to have access to HIV prevention, care, and treatment services," said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell. "The impact of this disparity is tragic."

"The fact that only half of children with HIV receive antiretrovirals is a scandal, and a stain on our collective conscience," said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General. "No child should be born with or grow up with HIV, and no child with HIV should go without treatment."



**THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE  
TO END AIDS IN CHILDREN**

Winnie Byanyima, the UNAIDS Executive Director said: "The wide gap in treatment coverage between children and adults is an outrage. Through this alliance, we will channel that outrage into action, by bringing together new improved medicines, new political commitment, and the determined activism of communities." 🌍



# Traditional Leadership urged to play positive role in fighting gender violence



Regional Commissioner for Correctional Services Tlabo Thokolo (first on the left) and UNODC Regional Representative Jane Marie Ongolo (centre) with traditional leaders

Recognizing the key role traditional leaders play in the fight against gender-based violence, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), organized a workshop in Limpopo Province on the issue in partnership with South Africa's Department of Correctional Services.

Violence against women in the country is widespread. Although the rates at which women are exposed to violence vary from one country to another, statistics indicate that the scourge is universal as women are subjected to different forms of violence both within and outside their homes. The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, has described violence against women as “reaching epidemic proportions.” Indeed, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical or sexual violence.

In South Africa, it is estimated that seven women are killed each day. According to the UNODC global homicide report, compared with other countries where statistics are more readily available, South Africa ranks among the five countries with the highest female homicide rates. The report says most of the women victims are killed by intimate partners (husband or boyfriend) or family-related homicides (father, brother, son, etc.). As symbols of unity and tolerance, traditional leaders are part of the authorities best placed to reverse the epidemic of gender-based violence (GBV). They can address the systematic, social inequality and disempowerment of women at the grassroots level. They can also engage men to be activists in countering GBV.

In his opening remarks at the workshop, the Regional Commissioner for Correctional Services, Tlabo Thokolo, highlighted the significance of the partnership with the traditional leaders, noting that “offenders, after serving their sentences, should be integrated into the community to lead better lives. They need the endorsement of the House of Traditional Leaders in order to be accepted by the community”.

Zama Mopai, a lecturer at the University of Venda, said there is an academic curriculum on traditional issues and customary law. “Many crimes are done in the name of culture, and hence, over time we are not able to define the meaning of culture,” she said, adding “but it should not take the fall for GBV and other crimes. She noted that culture



UNODC Regional Representative, Jane Marie Ongolo

a living thing that evolves and reflects the soul and needs of the community, and can accommodate and address emerging issues like GBV and drug abuse.

The leader of the House of Traditional Leaders, Hosi Ngove, expressed his willingness to have a formal relationship with UNODC and the Department of Correctional Services. He observed that the majority of victims and offenders come directly from rural areas, and it was the responsibility of traditional affairs to address crimes like GBV. He said he was disappointed by the delay in passing the Traditional Court Bill.

Deputy Minister Nkosi Holomisa emphasized the significance of a partnership with the House of Traditional Leaders. The UNODC Regional Representative, Jane Marie Ongolo, highlighted the appalling statistics related to the killing of women and children and emphasized the importance of achieving Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16; and the role of “female traditional leaders in creating “an enabling environment” for increased reporting, referral, and support of GBV cases.

UNODC's Linda Naidoo shared three key outcomes from the workshop, which included building the capacity of traditional leaders, especially female traditional leaders; promoting gender equality and women's empowerment within communities; and developing a guideline that incorporates the role of traditional leaders in addressing GBV and the killing of women. 🌍



# Using sports to promote peaceful co-existence in Western Cape Province



Social Cohesion Soccer Tournament in Cape Agulhas Municipality in Western Cape Province ©IOM 2022



Winners of the Social Cohesion tournament ©IOM 2022



Trophy and medals at the soccer tournament ©IOM 2022

Following attacks on foreign nationals in Cape Agulhas Municipality in Western Cape Province, the United Nations in South Africa teamed up with local and national government partners to organize a soccer tournament in Zwelitsha Township whose aim was to

promote peaceful co-existence and tolerance among local communities.

The attacks left more than one thousand migrants and their families displaced. They were later accommodated in local churches and the community hall. As part of reintegrating the foreign nationals back into Zwelitsha, the UN Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) collaborated with the Bredarsdorp Community Policing Forum, the Overberg District Municipality, the Government Communications and Information Systems (GCIS) and the Community Development Workers to organize a soccer tournament with the aim of promoting social cohesion.

The soccer tournament was made up of seven teams from the host communities and the migrants. The MPTF project provided soccer shirts, balls, miniature poles, medals, and a trophy for the tournament winner. Other partners provided the venue and catering, transport, and other promotional materials. The organizers also invited local artists to entertain spectators at the tournament.

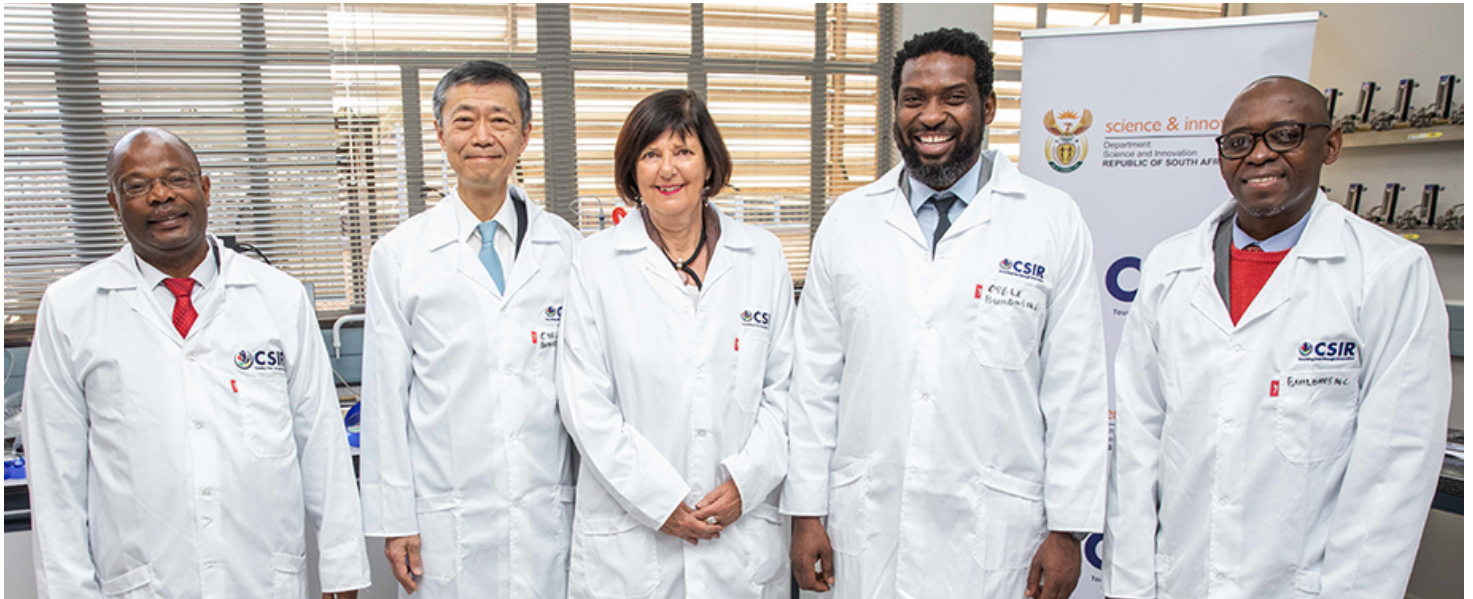
The tournament, which was organized as part of commemorating Nelson Mandela Month under the theme, “Do what you can, with what you have, wherever you are”, was designed to promote unity, social cohesion, and tolerance. It attracted more than 500 community members to watch their local soccer teams competing for the winner’s trophy.

In his remarks at the soccer event, the local councillor, Renier Louw, expressed his gratitude to the organizers for helping communities to realize that they can live together peacefully without fighting each other. “Zwelitsha is making history today, everyone is playing soccer, happy and peacefully,” he said.

In his remarks, Minister Nxesi welcomed the programme as a “progressive collaboration” which seeks to boost productivity and contribute to the overall national development effort. 🌍



# UNIDO and Japan provide equipment to Africa's first ISO-accredited biodegradation testing facility



(Left to Right) Levy Maduse (UNIDO), Ambassador Norio Maruyama (Government of Japan), Minister Barbara Creecy (DFPE), Minister Buti Manamela (DSI) and Dr. Thulani Dlamini (CSIR) at the launch of the biodegradation testing facility.

Within the framework of its project “Support for transitioning from conventional plastics to more environmentally sustainable alternatives”, which is funded by the Government of Japan, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) officially handed-over biodegradation assessment laboratory equipment to South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Pretoria. This makes it Africa's first ISO-accredited biodegradation testing facility.

“At present, bioplastics represent less than 1% of plastics produced annually in South Africa,” said the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Barbara Creecy. “I would like to emphasize that, with growing consumer demand and more sophisticated applications, the percentage of bioplastics in South Africa's total plastics production is expected to rise”.

Bioplastics have gained much attention as an alternative approach to shifting from petroleum-derived products that cannot be recycled and more towards “greener” and environmentally friendly alternatives that provide various end-of-life alternatives, such as biodegradability and recyclability in South Africa. “At present, bioplastics represent less than 1% of plastics produced annually in South Africa,” said Minister Creecy. “I would like to emphasize that, with growing consumer demand and more sophisticated applications, the percentage of bioplastics in South Africa's total plastics production is expected to rise”.

The laboratory equipment is one of the components of a three-year project funded by the Government of Japan that explores the potential for transitioning from conventional plastics to sustainable alternatives, including opportunities for local manufacturing and economic development; the new equipment includes an automated respirometer, an

automated titration system, and a carbon, hydrogen and sulphur analyzer.

Through the CSIR biodegradation testing facility, South Africa will be able to verify biodegradability claims on imported and locally produced materials that are promoted as biodegradable in various markets and establish the conditions and timeframes of the biodegradation of materials by carrying out lifecycle sustainability assessments which will evaluate the environmental impact of using different materials.

“I hope that, in the near future, when alternative materials for plastic are commonly used, people gathered at today's event will remember that this project paved the way for an eco-friendly lifestyle and will recognize how the cooperation between Japan, South Africa and UNIDO are positively changing lives towards a greener future,” Ambassador Norio Maruyama.

“This project contributes to the realization of the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” said UNIDO Deputy Representative Levy Maduse. “It also contributes to South Africa's key government priorities related to job creation as well as to the promotion of inclusive and sustainable developmental growth”.

## Goals we are supporting through this initiative



# Iconic School supports World Day Against Trafficking



Learners in the newly commissioned computer centre at Mphaphuli Secondary School in Limpopo Province

A popular rural school in South Africa's Limpopo Province hosted this year's main commemoration of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons which was jointly organized by the Department of Justice and Correctional Services and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Mphaphuli Secondary School, an iconic school in Thohoyandou District, was established in the 1920s and has grown exponentially, largely due to the support given by the local community. Among its former students is President Cyril Ramaphosa and renowned boxer Phillip N'dou.

World Day Against Trafficking is marked annually on 30 July. In commemoration of the day, about 1,500 school children interacted with dignitaries including the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Ronald Lamola.

The minister commissioned a computer centre with 10 computers and furniture bought through UNODC. The event, held under the global theme of the day, "Use and abuse of technology", was meant to emphasize that technology has become both an enabler of trafficking and also a possible tool to fight the crime.

Human trafficking has worsened since the onset of the internet. Among traffickers' most preferred ways of luring their victims is posting fake job offers online or promising employment opportunities mostly in far-off lands. Such recruitment and coercion often occur through targeting on social media.

Thus, the computers provided to Mphaphuli Secondary School are meant to support students to achieve computer literacy and to learn how to safely navigate cyberspace. Speaking at the event, Minister Lamola said online connectivity was among



UNODC Regional Representative, Jane Marie Ongolo, implored the learners to always navigate the internet safely

the manifestation of globalization which presented both opportunities and dangers, including human trafficking. The internet, he emphasized, allowed people to interact easily and in real-time, including on social media platforms like WhatsApp.

Earlier in the day, both Mr. Lamola and Dr. Ongolo spoke on the dangers of human trafficking in an interactive discussion with students at the University of Venda, located a stone's throw from Mphaphuli Secondary School.

Dr. Ongolo said anyone can become a victim of human trafficking. "Traffickers are now using the internet to lure those they want to traffic. This place is not that far from the border, so we need to be careful about human trafficking."

Turning to drug abuse – another UNODC's area of focus – Dr. Ongolo urged the university to work at being the site of a proposed e-learning tool that would enable the community to learn about the dangers of drug abuse. She said discussions were underway to explore other possible areas of cooperation between UNODC, the university, and agencies under the Department of Justice. 🌍



# Calls to fight corruption in South Africa gets louder



Jane Marie Ongolo, the UNODC Representative of the Regional Office for Southern Africa, signs the Anti-Corruption Pledge with the Government of South Africa

More than 500 participants from government agencies, civil society, the diplomatic corps, and the United Nations converged at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria from 8-9 December to commemorate this year's International Anti-Corruption Day. The event was co-organized by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Public Service Commission, and UNISA.

The theme of the event in South Africa was "The Cost of Failure of Governance and Ethics in the Public Service: Response to the Various Commissions of Inquiry into Allegations of Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector including Organs of State". The high-powered list of speakers at the event included the Acting Minister of Public Service and Administration, Thulas Nxesi; Chief Justice Raymond Zondo; the Chairperson of the National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council, Prof. Firoz Cachalia; the Deputy Speaker of the National Parliament, Lechesa Tsenoli; a law lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch, Prof. Thuli Madonsela; and the UNODC Regional Representative, Jane Marie Ongolo.

Others speakers included the Director-General of the Public Service Commission, Adv. Dinkie Dube; the Acting Public Protector, Adv. Kholeka Gcaleka; and the Principal and Vice Chancellor of UNISA, Prof. Puleng LenkaBula, as well as leaders from law enforcement and oversight bodies.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Ongolo talked about the importance of the UN Convention against Corruption in the fight against corruption. She expressed the UN's commitment and support to South Africa's ideals of building an effective government with the capacity to build the infrastructure able to provide essential services to all its citizens. She noted that the Government's National Development Plan Vision 2030 seeks to build a society that has zero tolerance for corruption and where anti-corruption agencies have the resources, independence, and powers to tackle corruption effectively.

The UNODC Representative highlighted the essential role of these agencies and oversight bodies and called for strong support and protection of these institutions.

Issues discussed at the event included the impact of corruption on society, the role of the National Anti-Corruption Advisory Council, the efforts and commitments to hold officials, executives, and directors to account based on evidence and findings from the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, and the role of law enforcement, prosecution services, and the judiciary. There was also a recognition of the importance of civil society to ensure a whole-of-state approach to anti-corruption.

***"Action against corruption helps protect every person's right to justice and opportunity to public services, and to a sustainable future,"***

***Dr. Bennet Ndyabangi.***

The South African Government is committed to providing domestic funding to support financing transitions of pilots and evaluations of biomedical interventions such as PrEP-based interventions, as well as engaging in sensitization for healthcare workers and implementers to provide services for key populations among others. We are committed to building resilient health and HIV systems to respond to pandemics and protect the gains we have made."

In his remarks, the Acting Resident Coordinator of the UN in South Africa, Dr. Bennet Ndyabangi, who is also the Country Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), emphasized that tackling corruption head-on helps the world to meet some of the most significant current developmental challenges that, if resolved, could spark change towards achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind. He noted that "preventing and combating corruption strengthen democracy and the rule of law. It promotes social and economic development. It helps protect South Africa's vast natural and cultural wealth.

*(Continues on next page)*



(continuing from previous page)

It is conducive to job creation, helps achieve gender equality, and secures more comprehensive access to essential services such as healthcare and education."

"Simply put," Dr. Ndyabangi added, "action against corruption helps protect every person's right to justice and opportunity, to public services, and to a sustainable future". He further emphasized the crucial role of whistle-blowers and the urgency to better protect them from retaliation.

In her statement, Ms. Ongolo said that "twenty years of the Convention is a good moment to reflect on the achievements made and most importantly, to identify and determine specific areas of the anti-corruption frameworks that can be bolstered and intensified. South Africa can continue to count on the support of the United Nations in the broader areas of anti-

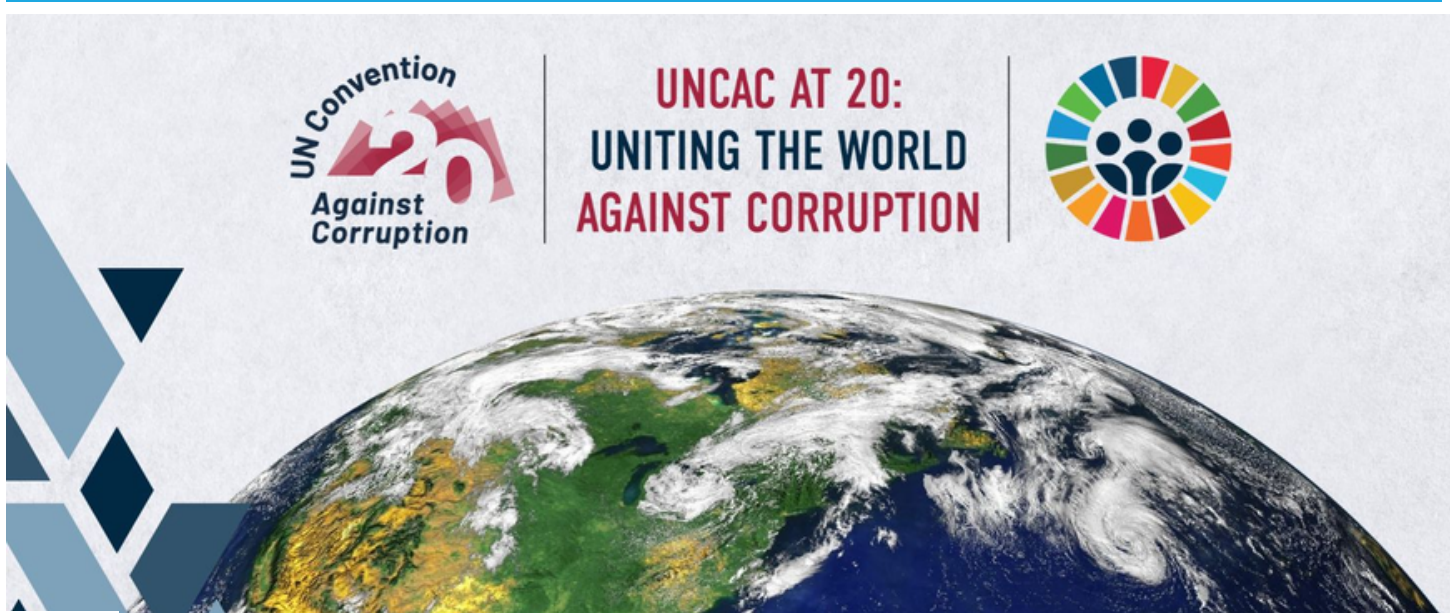
corruption, governance, transparency and accountability".

The UN General Assembly designated 9 December as the International Anti-Corruption Day in 2003. The anti-corruption convention is the sole legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. It's far-reaching approach and the mandatory character of many of its provisions make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to this global scourge. With its 189 States parties, the Convention is nearing universal ratification. South Africa ratified the convention in 2005.

During the event at UNISA, the leaders signed an anti-corruption pledge to never abuse money entrusted on their care or position, act with integrity in all their dealings, and always act in the best interest of their country. 🌍



Officials who signed the Anti-Corruption Pledge





# UN Population Fund holds talks with Limpopo provincial authorities on social issues



Limpopo Provincial Coordination Forum Government Partners and Stakeholders, Polokwane Province



From left to right: Ntjie Patricia Ngwanalesele (LP DSD Welfare services), Conny Raphahlelo (OTP, Precious Magogodi (UNFPA), Alice Tshwene Nkoana (LP DoH)

In an effort to strengthen the coordination of social issues in Limpopo Province, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in South Africa, the Office of the Premier, and the provincial Department of Social Development held their first in-person engagement to discuss how to implement programmes designed to close youth inequality gaps in the province. UNFPA is currently supporting an integrated programme intended to promote sexual reproductive health and rights in Limpopo's Vhembe and Waterberg districts.

The meeting was held under the auspices of the Limpopo Provincial Coordination Forum, whose primary authority is to monitor the progress of social programmes in the province and hold make partners and stakeholders accountable.

Attendees at the discussions included youth representatives and officials from the Office of the Premier, the departments of Social Development, Health, and Education as well as the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. Also represented were the Vhembe and Waterberg district municipalities, Lovelife, and individual consultants. UNFPA was represented by the Adolescent and Youth Specialist, Precious Magogodi, as the agency's technical lead for Limpopo.

In her opening remarks, Conny Raphahlelo from the Office of the Premier said the province was very grateful to have partnered with UNFPA South Africa as such investments go a long way to improve social services and strengthen the province's capacity to respond to the needs of young people. Patricia Ntjie from the Welfare Services of Limpopo's Department of Social Development outlined some of the priorities in the Vhembe and Waterberg districts.

The forum is tasked with finding solutions to issues such as comprehensive sexuality education in the wake of climate change and reviewing the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide as well as social behaviour change strategies. In her opening remarks, Conny Raphahlelo from the Office of the Premier, said the province was very grateful to have partnered with UNFPA South Africa as such investments go a long way to improve social services and strengthen the province's capacity to respond to the needs of young people. Patricia Ntjie, from the Welfare Services of Limpopo's Department of Social Development, outlined some of the priorities in Vhembe and Waterberg districts.

These include the two districts of Vhembe and Waterberg, which have been hard hit by teenage pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, Gender-Based Violence, and many other social ills that impede the development of young people. The main outcome of the engagements was the establishment of coordination mechanisms between government partners and stakeholders to implement the province's workplace. 🌍



# UN Deputy Secretary-General delivers the Desmond Tutu International Peace Lecture



The UN Deputy Secretary-General  
Amina Mohammed

The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed, in October delivered the 12th Annual Desmond Tutu International Peace Lecture in Cape Town, saying the celebration of Tutu's legacy has "never been more relevant in our world of great pain". The purpose and heart of the Peace Lecture, whose theme was "A Vision for Hope and Healing", is rooted in the Desmond and Leah Legacy Foundation's work to transform collective consciousness through the courageous pursuit of healing, inspired by the legacy that Archbishop Tutu left in the world. This was the first lecture since the death of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu in December 2021 at the age of 90. The lecture was also held on the day that coincided with Archbishop's birthday, 7 October, and Ms. Tutu's birth month.

In her speech, Ms. Mohammed noted that "in the last few years, we all witnessed the devastating impact of a global pandemic, climate change and conflict which has helped to bring us together," adding that Archbishop Tutu was a true believer in the power of multilateralism. He was also a distinguished member of the United Nations Advisory Committee on Genocide Prevention, took part in a High-Level Fact-Finding Mission to Gaza and more broadly, was engaged in many other global issues such as promoting joint solutions through listening and dialogue. "He knew that no matter the size of the country, no one could do it alone," she said.

"His work has also supported major economic and social progress which has been a cornerstone of international peace, from promoting prevention and resolution of conflict to providing humanitarian relief, and saving millions of lives," added the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed.

On his legacy, the Deputy Secretary-General noted that the Archbishop "also understood that peace, in its broader conception, can only be achieved if we approach humanity as a community in which in any African village everyone takes care of each other. His notion of peace is not only the absence of violence or conflict, but the pursuit of common values."

"This concept is reflected in African thinking and policies today that need to be implemented. Likewise, the Secretary-General's proposal for a New Agenda for Peace are a key element of the Common Agenda, that is addressing new and emerging threats, while ensuring that human, political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights are leveraged as a main tool for conflict prevention in the pursuit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals," she said.

"Let us honour the 'Arch' on his birthday by living and acting on the inspiration he gave us for the hope that we may find deep within us, the will to be part of healing the torn fabric of our societies in a world of crisis, and yet with so much hope for the future." Turning to the UN and its role in multilateralism, the Deputy Secretary-General told the audience that the Organization remains for me "the only forum in the world where parties come together to transform common threats into shared solutions. We try to face the reality of the day with the aspirations of humankind, and each day, we try to close the gap. Some days are good days, and some days, not so good."

Noting that current global challenges were undermining trust in multilateralism at a time when we actually need it most, Ms. Mohammed called for "a reformed and a strengthened multilateral system with the transformation for being more fit for purpose of the United Nations at the core."

(Continued on next page)



Former Executive Director of UN Women Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka  
(Second from left)



Musician Vicky Sampson performing "My African Dream"



(Continued from previous page)

Explaining what a strengthened multilateral system would mean for Africa and how the continent could get where its people need to be, Ms. Mohammed said, "I believe that we have to start recognizing first that we are not beginning from nothing, we are not beginning from scratch; we must change the narrative, we are not hopeless nor are we helpless, our potentials are enormous."

"We are 54 sovereign nations on varying paths of democracy. We have 1.4 billion people, 2,5 trillion-dollar market opportunities, and the fasted growing FinTech - connecting people, especially our women, to financial services. We have the institutions, the United Nations, the African Union, the African Development Bank, Afrexim Bank and we have over 25 stock exchanges, with the largest being in Johannesburg. We have the necessary instruments – there is the 2030 Agenda (the SDGs), there is [Agenda] 2063 and there is the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)," she said.

She added, "So with the potential, with the institutions, and with the instruments, that, I believe, in itself is hope. We need to begin at the local level, supporting communities, especially women and youth. That means the devolution of resources to build resilience and strong foundations for the Africa house." The other speaker at the lecture was best-selling author Doug Abrams. 🌍

**"We must change the narrative, we are not hopeless nor are we helpless, our potentials are enormous."**

**Amina Mohammed**



**DESMOND TUTU**  
12th INTERNATIONAL PEACE LECTURE  
A VISION FOR  
*Hope & Healing*

**Thank you to  
Amina J Mohammed**

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations  
for inspiring us



# Government and the United Nations join hands to assist local governments

As part of efforts to develop local government districts in South Africa under a “One Plan” approach, the Government and the United Nations recently launched an initiative to raise funds for pilot projects in the three provinces of Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. The projects, which are in the districts of O.R. Tambo (Eastern Cape), Waterberg (Limpopo) and eThekweni (KwaZulu-Natal), are part of the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) signed by the UN and the Government early this year.

The joint approach is intended to incorporate public, private, and civil society participation and investment in an effort to provide support for the development of human capital, improve service delivery and create jobs. The plan also involves visits to the project sites in Waterberg District that have been identified for restoration such as the Thusong Service Centres, which are one-stop centres for service delivery, and Thuthuzela Care Centres, which cater to survivors of gender-based violence.



## 1. HEALTH FIRST



Protecting health services and systems

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE



Social protection and basic services

The type of delivery system to be used in supporting the districts is based on three key factors that are crucial to the success of the projects. The first is unlocking economic value chains that focus on providing business development services to small, micro- and medium-enterprises (SMMES) with special emphasis on women- and youth-led businesses. The priority in these areas is the just transition to a low-carbon economy, and working with the labour unions to train the local workforce on skills identified for the green economy.

The second factor is to develop human capital and encourage social transformations that would create a sustainable solutions to gender-based-violence and femicide and to develop skills relevant to high-performing district sectors. (Continued on next page)

## 3. ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY



Protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the informal sector workers

## 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION





(Continued from previous page)

The third factor focuses on improving service delivery through good governance at Thusong Centres, formerly known as Multi-Purpose Community Centres. The community centres play a crucial role in improving citizen's access to public services. They also ensure that economic opportunities are accessible and that they meet the basic needs of people often relegated to the margins of society, by acting as conduits between citizens, government and various social partners. The idea is to decentralize the operations of these centres so they can provide improved, consistent and efficient service delivery to South Africans across the country.

## 5. ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY



### PROGRESS AND WORK

There has been notable progress by UN in South Africa thus far in implementing some of the signature projects and related value chains. One of projects is within the Food Waste Sub-Sector for Sustainable Jobs and Inclusive Growth, which has been completed in eThekweni, O.R. Tambo and Waterberg districts. The Digital Skills for Decent Jobs for Youth-not-in Employment, Education or Training (YNEET) was completed in O.R. Tambo and Waterberg districts. Also completed are the Drought Intervention Project in O.R. Tambo and Waterberg, and the UN Women value chain facilitation in Waterberg.

On-going projects include the second phase of the Rural Television White Space Network Operator Support Programme which is providing support to the SMMEs to bridge the digital divide. Others are the Expansion Programme for Women in Agriculture, Agri-business and Agro-processing; the Farmer Field School approach; the Informal sector and SMMEs Support; the SA Industrial Energy Efficiency Project; the Biogas project; and the project on bridging the gap on linking youth to the Future of Work by closing the digital divide. 🌐



# KWAZULU-NATAL FLOODS: The UN assists victims of the flooding disaster

A woman at a shelter in KwaZulu-Natal Province where most women and children sought refuge following the April/May 2022 floods. More than 400 people died and thousands more displaced by the floods.

A woman weeps as she remembers the devastation and loss she encountered due to the floods.



(Continued from previous page)

Many of the women we spoke to talked about their young school-going children and the psychological impact homelessness and destitution had caused. They were grateful that the UN and its partners have been able to provide psycho-social support and continuous access to therapy to assist them to come to terms with their losses. Some of the women said their children ask them to “please hold me when it rains”. Another woman said her child had since developed epilepsy and remains terrified of the storms.

Several mothers talked about how their children have become quiet and withdrawn. A saving grace to many was that in addition to the cash grants and counselling, they were also recipients of dignity kits and food items which alleviated some of the stress of losing their belongings. Many are slowly rebuilding their lives, despite remaining in the shelters, by resuming their businesses, which range from food take-aways to tailoring. Slowly, life is starting to get better.

While many of the donated items were an immediate response to the needs of the people affected, the UN was cognizant of the fact that the volatile situation could exacerbate other social ills such as conflicts between locals and foreign nationals, domestic violence and gender-based violence as well as the interruption of classes and informal trade. As part of its response, UN is continuing to address these issues through social cohesion programmes and giving the flood victims access to resources and materials on gender-based violence at shelters and other frequented areas.



Children playing in a Shelter in KwaZulu-Natal province for those affected by the floods

UN agencies continue to support affected schools through the provision of building materials and other educational resources. They have also provided support to informal traders in the form of cash grants and business items in partnership with government departments.

The impact of the flooding disaster is still being felt by many both economically and emotionally. However, there remains hope that with resilience and perseverance, people in the affected provinces will continue to build back better. 🌈



One of the women residing in the shelter in KwaZulu-Natal following the floods in May 2022.



United Nations donation of female and male dignity packages to those affected in KZN.

# KWAZULU-NATAL FLOODS: UN Volunteers strengthen capacity in the KZN Province Disaster Management Centres



Lulamisani Chauke, a UN Volunteer, preparing for a meeting on food planning



a workplan based on the gaps and challenges that they have identified and observed from the time they arrived in July. These gaps include specialist teams overseeing disaster management at some municipalities not working properly while others feel they do not participate enough and therefore lack the necessary experience. The departments and municipalities have to be involved in the planning.” The volunteers have since developed a workplan based on the gaps and challenges that they have identified and observed from the time they arrived in July.

Following a three-day visit to the flood-ravaged KwaZulu-Natal Province earlier this year, a United Nations technical team identified the need to strengthen the ability of the provincial and municipal disaster management centres to respond effectively to the National State of Disaster. In response, four UN volunteers were deployed at the Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC) offices to enhance its capacity in supporting 54 municipalities. The four volunteers all hail from humble beginnings in rural or informal areas of South Africa. As a result of their work on nature and agriculture while growing up, it was a natural progression for them to study geography and environmental sciences.

While they each possess different sets of skills, the volunteers’ main responsibility is to add capacity to the Disaster Risk Reduction and Planning Department whose aim is mitigate risks from disasters such as the floods that devastated the province in early 2022. The volunteers work closely with the municipalities and the districts to support disaster management through workshops and awareness campaigns, among others.

Through the workshops, the volunteers aim to dispel some myths on disaster management. As explained by Lulamisani Chauke, one of the volunteers, “There is this concept that disaster management is about giving out blankets and food parcels. While this does form part of the process, it’s not the only part. There is the very important planning phase which sets out the response to a disaster, should one occur, and who is responsible for which roles,” he says.

“In addition, what can be put in place to reduce the risk of a disaster, such as avoiding building on the flood lines, etc. We also conduct awareness campaigns on fires as well as looking at coordinating resources so each department can lead on certain aspects. We know that disaster management is multi-disciplinary and cross cutting so ideally all the departments and municipalities have to be involved in the planning.” The volunteers have since developed

**The volunteers’ main responsibility is to add capacity to the Disaster Risk Reduction and Planning Department whose aim is mitigate risks from disasters such as the floods that devastated the province in early 2022. The volunteers work closely with the municipalities and the districts to support disaster management through workshops and awareness campaigns, among others.**

These gaps include specialist teams overseeing disaster management at some municipalities not working properly while others feel they do not participate enough and therefore lack the necessary experience.

One of the volunteers’ responsibilities is to resuscitate advisory forums or task teams to better prepare municipalities for future disasters. Also, some municipalities and districts do not have disaster management plans at all, which is a concern as there is no “guiding tool to respond,” while other municipalities have outdated plans.

The volunteers are supporting municipality teams to develop disaster management plans, review and adapt them to ever-changing risks. As the impact of every disaster differs, the plans need to include all risks and factors.

Terrence Mcineka, a volunteer hydrologist, says his primary job is being part of the team that is developing the flood risk management plan for the entire province, which is closely linked to hydrology. [\(Continued on next page\)](#)





# WE, THE VOLUNTEERS



UN volunteers on a site visit in KwaZulu-Natal Province

“The province does not have a plan that speaks specifically to flooding disasters. The plan must be a holistic one and informed by local municipalities with their input and involvement as communities in those municipalities are the ones severely impacted when a flood occurs,” says Terrence.

According to Silindokuhle Biyela, another volunteer, some of the challenges they face relate to housing materials in certain locations, including rural areas. She says the concern is that some homes are made from mud and thatch roofing and these are more prone to collapse during the rainy season.

“We have noticed that people in urban areas and roads in well-built areas have been affected where we once would not have thought those houses would collapse such as Umhlanga and Umdloti. We can no longer think that disasters are only affecting rural areas as we are seeing it now impacting everyone,” says Silindokuhle.

“Location of housing structures is very important because if the place is a wetland, then with heavy rainfall, that house is going to collapse. We need to now look at locations of houses more closely because disaster is indiscriminate.”

The fourth volunteer, Bahle Mazeka, a human settlement specialist, added that housing and spatial planning is a challenge as there are homes built alongside rivers and other inhabitable areas. “In 2019, these homes collapsed and now we see them being built in the exact same places and then collapsing again due to climate change. We are reviewing with other stakeholders the impact of these floods and what it means for climate change, spatial planning and how land is used,” say Bahle.

The province has seen heavier rainfall before April but because houses are being built on uninhabitable areas, flooding and landslides have increased. This speaks to land-use management and my primary function is to work in that stream.”

The volunteers have been travelling in and around the province conducting assessments and workshops on disaster management to ensure that by the time they complete their tasks, they would have left behind tangible resources for all stakeholders involved.

According to the PDMC, the UN Volunteers have provided them with support and technical expertise on various activities such as the development and review of the provincial disaster risk profile, technical expertise for the Provincial Post Disaster Evaluation and other related tasks as required.

The UN Volunteers have been instrumental in getting the PDMC to function, more so as the Chief Directorate had 21 vacant posts, which is a clear indication of its human resource capacity challenges. The volunteers have performed over and above the expectations of the PDMC and demonstrated a high level of professionalism and dedication.

Their volunteer programme ends in December 2022. 🌍



UN Volunteers on a site visit.

# Kwazulu-Natal Floods: Meet the UN Volunteers at the PDMC



**Name:** Bahle Mazeka

**Age:** 36 years old

**Originally from:** Bizane, Eastern Cape Province

**Qualifications:** Environmental Management – University of KwaZulu-Natal; Geographic Information Systems – Nelson Mandela University & Master's degree in Urban Development



**Name:** Lulamisani Chauke

**Age:** 28 years old

**Originally from:** Soshanguve, Pretoria, Gauteng Province

**Qualifications:** Geography and Environmental Studies – North West University; Honours in Disaster Management and Risk Assessment – North West University



**Name:** Terrence Mcineka

**Age:** 30 years old

**Originally from:** Kwamaphumulo, KwaZulu-Natal Province

**Qualifications:** BSC Geography and Hydrology; Master's degree in Hydrobiology



**Name:** Silindokuhle Biyela

**Age:** 35 years old

**Originally from:** Mandeni, Kwazulu-Natal Province

**Qualifications:** Public Administration – University of KwaZulu-Natal; Postgraduate Diploma in Disaster Management – University of Free State



# New Faces: Nelson Muffuh, UN Resident Coordinator in South Africa



Nelson Muffuh

The new UN Resident Coordinator, South Africa

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appointed Nelson Muffuh of Cameroon as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in South Africa, with the host Government's approval. He took up his post on the 1 December 2022.

Nelson Muffuh brings more than 20 years of experience in international relations and negotiations, political and development issues at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters, regional and country levels. Prior to his appointment as United Nations Resident Coordinator, Nelson Muffuh served as Chief of Staff and Principal Strategic Adviser to the UN Deputy Secretary-General since 2017. He led the overall management and guidance of staff, focusing on the acceleration of systemwide and whole-of-society efforts on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and on the repositioning the UN development system and strengthening the Resident Coordinators system.

As lead strategic adviser and policy coordinator on sustainable development political and partnerships interventions, Mr. Muffuh helped shape and advance the UN's comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, advocate and organize summits on the SDGs, Financing for Development, and Climate Action. He was instrumental in convening and coordinating the efforts of launching the Spotlight Initiative on violence against women and girls, the Decade of Action for the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and the Global Crisis Response Group to address the impacts on food, energy, and finance due to the war in Ukraine.



Prior to this, Mr. Muffuh led and coordinated stakeholder engagement, outreach, and global strategic partnerships efforts to inform the post-2015 development policy process, whose outcome was the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its accompanying SDGs to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

Nelson Muffuh started his UN career with the UN Development Programme-UN Millennium Campaign, then UN Population Fund in Africa, where he acquired extensive experience in programme management, multistakeholder collaborative interventions, partnerships and communications, as well as advocacy and mobilization. Before that, he served as a Senior Programme and Advocacy Advisor for Christian Aid, and Programme Coordinator for the African Liberal Network-Westminster Foundation for Democracy and Transparency International Secretariat. Mr. Muffuh studied political science and international relations at Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, and development cooperation at Sussex University, United Kingdom. He is married and has two children.

## The Resident Coordinator

In South Africa, the Resident Coordinator is the head of the United Nations and representative of the UN Secretary-General. He facilitates and coordinates the United Nations operational activities in South Africa. The Resident Coordinator system (RC system) encompasses all organizations of the United Nations system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. 🌍



# LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND



**Sustainable Economic Growth**



**Social Transformation**



**Transformative Governance**



**Sustainably Managed Natural Resources**

The Editor, UNIC Pretoria  
Email: [unic-pretoria@un.org](mailto:unic-pretoria@un.org)  
Telephone: +27 12 354 8507  
Website: [www.southafrica.un.org](http://www.southafrica.un.org)  
   @UNinSouthAfrica