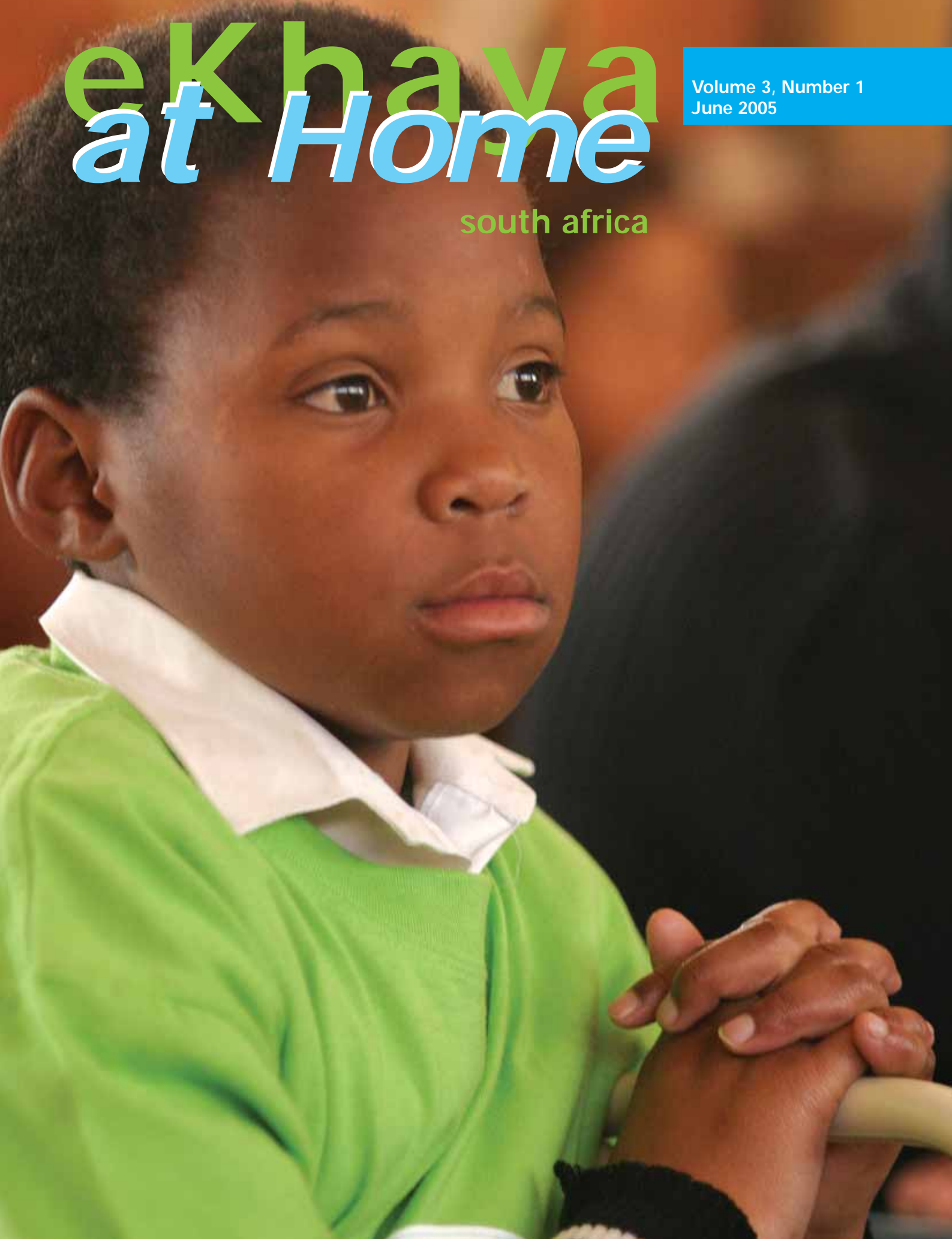


eKhaya *at Home*

south africa

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For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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Front cover:
An attentive young boy
in his classroom in
Soweto.

Photo: Giacomo Pirozzi

FAREWELL MESSAGE

IN THIS ISSUE:

Foreword

It's time to say Goodbye by Misrak Elias, Country Representative 2

In Focus

Constitutional Court receives children's rights painting 3

Saying goodbye to Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel 3

Harry Belafonte back in South Africa 4

Procurement Centre responds to Angola emergency 4

SOWC 2005: Children lead debate with Eastern Cape provincial leadership 5

UNICEF and Nelson Mandela Foundation launch Schools for Africa campaign 6

SACO Web site launched 6

New Resident Coordinator 7

70 health facilities have on-line birth registration 7

South Africans give to UNICEF for tsunami relief 7

Young Voices

SOWC 2005: Children's reports from Eastern Cape 8

Artists and activists celebrate Bob Marley's 60th birthday in Addis 9

Young People at Marley Symposium adopt Demands and Pledges 9

ICDB: It's a first! Young people broadcast own programmes in Maputoland, KZN 10

About Us

SACO staff supports Lotus Children's Home 11

eKhaya Says: 11

Condolences 11

New in the KRC 12

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Dear Colleagues,

It is time to say goodbye, after an exciting two years of working with the UNICEF team here in South Africa. It has also been an especially rewarding experience to represent UNICEF here, at a time when the country celebrated its achievement of ten years of democracy and freedom, knowing that we in UNICEF have contributed in a small way to the realization of children's rights. I would like to pay tribute to your work in making a difference in the lives of children by providing meaningful support to our partners in Government, NGOs, CBOs and academic institutions and, above all, to families and communities.

It has been a privilege to work with partners in a country like South Africa – a beacon of development for the entire continent, and one that is demonstrating every day what can be accomplished with the commitment of government to people centred development. I would like to highlight a few of the milestones for children with which UNICEF South Africa is associated: The adoption of the Girls Education Movement (GEM) as a government policy that has resulted in the establishment of GEM clubs in hundreds of schools in the three focal provinces. Eastern Cape is leading the way with a full roll-out plan for all its schools that is now underway. A national ECD policy guideline, that provides for the development our youngest, most vulnerable children and for the care and protection of children who have lost their parents, is in place. On-line birth registration, now possible in 70 public hospitals, is rapidly spreading around the country, thereby helping to secure children's access to critical social safety nets and essential services. The fortification of everyday foods will improve nutrition standards for families; a sharp increase in baby-friendly health facilities and continuing support for the near universal access to PMTCT, are also worth noting. We can also be proud of the bold strides we have made, working with local authorities, traditional leaders, children, families and communities in ensuring the development of Local Plans of Action for creating "municipalities fit for children".

Being part of the UNICEF family of dedicated professionals has been a special pleasure for me. As I look back on my years in the organisation, I have been fortunate to serve at the regional, headquarters and country levels, starting out in this region as ESARO adviser on women in development and supporting women's economic and social empowerment. As global policy advisor on gender, I facilitated mainstreaming gender in UNICEF programmes. But my most rewarding experience was being instrumental in placing the girl child as a critical area for action on the global development agenda. After 18 years, I can truly say that the most exciting aspect of working in UNICEF is serving at the country level, as I found out when I was appointed UNICEF Representative in Jordan where I had the opportunity to bring youth issues to the national agenda; and once again here in South Africa with its own special challenges.

In retiring from UNICEF, I look forward to embarking to the next phase of my life when I will devote more time to family and to continue to being involved in work for and with children and young people, particularly girls.

I would like to thank all of you for your support and dedication during my tenure as UNICEF Representative here, and I wish you all fulfillment in your personal and professional lives.

Misrak Elias



SACO partners say farewell to Misrak: It was a beautiful evening attended by senior government officials, civil society representatives; bilateral donors, United Nations agencies, and UNICEF Staff. There were messages from partners depicting the wealth of experience that characterises Misrak's professional, family and personal life experience. Although they came from different sectors, all seemed to have translated one core thought and belief by all present - To live, to love, to learn and to leave a legacy. Misrak was requested by the partners to continue to network with all of us on this legacy for the rights of children, women, and their families; to always keep the flames burning for the children of Africa and the world ! She promised to do so, while pursuing her dream to continue working for and with adolescents and young people in her own country. In this photo, Ambassador Thorben Brylle of Denmark says goodbye to the Rep.

Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel

bid farewell to Executive Director and Country Representative

Johannesburg, 17 March 2005 – In a farewell call on Mr Nelson Mandela and Mrs Graça Machel this morning, Carol Bellamy, UNICEF Executive Director, reaffirmed UNICEF's commitment to raise US\$ 1 billion through its global network of national committees to fight HIV and AIDS among infected and affected children worldwide.

Miss Bellamy requested Mr Mandela's and Mrs Machel's continued support for initiatives aimed at HIV and AIDS prevention, care, support and treatment of children and youth infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Miss Bellamy, who will leave UNICEF at the end of April after 10 years of service to the global organisation, also expressed appreciation to Mr Mandela and Mrs Machel for their unwavering commitment to the cause of the poor and the vulnerable across the African continent – and especially in South Africa. She cited their role to help end conflicts at the sub-regional level, particularly in Burundi and DRC, which have had terrible consequences on women and children.

UNICEF and the Nelson Mandela Foundation launched the Schools for Africa campaign last December, which will accelerate access to quality basic education for children in six Southern African countries: Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

UNICEF South Africa and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund also work together to support local development plans of action for children.

Miss Bellamy was accompanied on her visit by Miss Misrak Elias, UNICEF SA Country Representative who will be retiring at the end of this month and Mr Per Engebak, regional director for UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa.



Farewell call: After ten years of service, UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy makes a farewell call on Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel, partners in the Global Movement for Children, at Mandela House in Johannesburg.

IN FOCUS

Constitutional Court receives massive children's rights painting

Johannesburg, 19 March 2005

In celebration of Human Rights Day, Monday 21 March, UNICEF together with children representing the national youth group Soul Buddyz Clubs, today officially handed over a large mural painted by club children and others to Justice Yvonne Mokgoro and the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg.

The mural was one of 12 painted and displayed on Constitutional Hill on Youth Day 16 June 2004, as part of UNICEF's "1000 Wishes of the Children of the World"

initiative, in which South African children joined their German, Brazilian and Japanese counterparts in creating a giant painting depicting their dreams, aspirations and rights.

Justice Mokgoro, who was the keynote speaker at the function on Constitution Hill, reminded the audience that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a special document which contains universally recognised standards of human rights specifically applicable to children. "It contains special principles and special rights



Justice Yvonne Mokgoro (fourth from left) of the South African Constitutional Court, poses with children from Soul Buddyz Clubs, Keabetswe Molose, Puseletso Mphaka, Lisandi Smit, and Sinthemba Maneli, in front of the large painted mural presented to the Court by UNICEF and the children. The handing over of the mural symbolises and celebrates children's rights as enshrined in the South African constitution and national Human Rights Day. The painting will take up permanent residence in the court.

that children should have for their own protection, care and treatment so that they can be happy and contented and feel secure, loved and understood," she said.

According to the children who made the brightly coloured panel, the painting's main theme is a call for a cure for HIV and AIDS showing a nurse vaccinating a patient and hearts as well as flowers. It reflects their right to health and protection and a happy life, they said.

In line with South Africa's national Human Rights Day celebrations, the handing over of the mural symbolises the rights of children as enshrined in the South African constitution. The mural will take permanent residence in the court as a reminder of children's rights and the need to recognise, hear and amplify the voices of children and young people.

Guests at today's event included Constitutional Court Judges Mokgoro, O'Regan and Sachs, UNICEF Country Representative Misrak Elias and Soul City, representatives of the German Embassy Representatives, and Soul City.

Goodwill Ambassador Emeritus

Harry Belafonte back in South Africa

"I belong and work for the world's most popular and powerful party: the children's freedom party"

Fresh from his recording session with the German NatCom in Berlin calling for support for the fundraising campaign to build 1,000 child-friendly schools in six southern African countries, Harry Belafonte, one of world's most respected entertainers and Goodwill Ambassador Emeritus for UNICEF came back to the African soil that has for so long inspired his passion and drive for freedom, justice and dignity.

This time round, Mr. Belafonte came back to South Africa on 14 December 2004, to make a film about his life - covering his childhood to the present time - which, he said, will be broadcast in 5 TV segments, in movie theaters and private screenings in the United States and around the world. Mr. Belafonte explained that he had selected his audience very carefully. With this movie, he wants to capture the attention of policy-makers - those who should know about the realities of the struggle for justice in the context of globalization. Of course, the disparities between the "haves and have nots", the scourge of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and the harsh realities of the poverty stricken people of the world are also given full airing in his movie.

In a bid to keep his life story at its best, Harry's filming captured the voices and aspirations of South African leaders such as former President Nelson Mandela, President Thabo Mbeki, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, national and provincial government officials in Gauteng and the Western Cape. He also Conversations with leading personalities in the media and entertainment worlds, academia, children and communities were also included on his agenda. Durign discussions, Mr. Belafonte affirmed that he would like to sustain and continue to work for the most popular and powerful party of the world, which he has named: The Children's Freedom Party.

Every year, special observances during the month of December (World's AIDS Day and Human Rights Day among others), help underscore the need for the world to reflect and take action to reduce the suffering of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence linked to HIV and AIDS. Sexual violence poses serious challenges to society and a growing numbers of Thuthuzela Care Centres located in communities around the country are working to improve the process of reporting and prosecution of rape and other sexual offences in a dignified and caring environment.

With Mr. Belafonte's visit following closely on the observances and his strong advocacy efforts in the fight against HIV and AIDS, UNICEF and government partners arranged to visit the Thuthuzela Care Centre at the Baragwaneth Hospital in Soweto. The



Harry is greeted by the media and a team of health workers from the Thuthuzela Care Centre. UNICEF supports the work of the centres nationally to care for women and children who are victims of sexual violence through funding from the Danish Government Development Agency (DANIDA) .

Centre's work is part of a powerful national strategy aimed at addressing the high levels of sexual violence against women and children, especially rape.

Thuthuzela services bring together communities, families, health, education, police services, justice, social development and non-governmental organizations seeking to lessen the trauma of sexual violence and to reduce secondary victimization of survivors. The centres provide patients with

medical care, counselling, access to dedicated investigators and prosecutors all under one roof. Mr. Belafonte also visited the sexual offences court linked to this centre, ending his stay in Johannesburg with a visit to a Soweto hospice. There he was an eyewitness to current efforts to mitigate the HIV and AIDS epidemic while recognizing the many hurdles and challenges still ahead.

Harry Belafonte has been a UNICEF Goodwill ambassador since 4 March 1987.

Procurement Centre responds to Angola emergency

Congratulations to our colleagues in the Procurement Centre for their excellent support to the Angola Marburg outbreak emergency! The Centre has been very busy recently, responding to the outbreak of the highly contagious disease which has already claimed 257 lives, at the request of our in Angola office. Luanda has expressed its appreciation for the excellent support they have received from Pretoria.

The Centre has already undertaken emergency procurement and air freighting as a part of the UNICEF support to this emergency. A range of emergency supplies, including body bags, gum boots and other protective clothing, knapsack sprayers, HTH calcium hypochlorite, cleaning supplies and medical supplies, have all been procured and shipped to Angola during the past three weeks.

"The support from TAAG Angolan Airlines also been terrific; they gave priority to UNICEF supplies on their regular flights from Johannesburg," says Procurement Chief, Brian Clear, adding, "We are continuing to procure and ship other supplies such as additional quantities of calcium hypochlorite for water treatment."

Premier Balindlela and children debate issues raised in SOWC 2005 in East London, Eastern Cape

An inter-generational dialogue between children and the Eastern Cape provincial leadership, headed by Premier Nosimo Balindlela, the province's colourful hands-on leader, framed the launch of the State of the World's Children report, 2005 on 13 December at the Frances Mmeli School of Safety in East London, Eastern Cape.

Eastern Cape Province, one of South Africa's former homelands known as Transkei, under the apartheid regime, was selected as the venue because it is one of the poorest provinces in South Africa. Because of endemic poverty, the province also has the highest unemployment rate in the country and high numbers of marginalised children, children's homes and places of safety.

According to the South African Institute for Democracy (IDASA), eighty eight per cent of the province's children lived below the poverty line of R490 per month in 2002, while unemployment stood at 32.5 per cent. By March 2004, it was at 27.8 per cent according to a labour force survey by Statistics South Africa.

Eastern Cape is also the birthplace of two of the country's Presidents – Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki – yet evidence of economic and social transformation is mostly minimal and slow.

The launch was hosted jointly by UNICEF South Africa and the Eastern Cape Premier's Office under which the Provincial Programme of Action for Children falls. Throwing its full support behind the project, the Office ensured the turnout of over 150 children and young people, members of the House of Traditional Leaders, NGO stakeholders and members of the Provincial Legislature. UNICEF South Africa organised media coverage and content aspects of the launch, arranging for a HRAP specialist to spend a day and a half in workshops to prepare a panel of 78 children from a cross section of social backgrounds, so they would be comfortable raising issues with the adult panellists who represented some of the highest authorities in the nation.

In presenting the main points of the report, Dr. Sibeso Luswata, Programme Officer for Education, stressed that child survival was UNICEF's fundamental concern in interventions in the three areas addressed by the report, Poverty, HIV and AIDS and Conflict, all of which the report says, robs children of their childhood.

Premier pledges Government support to eradicate poverty

In her keynote statement, Premier Balindlela encouraged the young people present to speak up for themselves and called on various children in the audience to speak about their lives. "Poverty is the enemy of every child and should be eradicated," the Premier said, promising to put the human rights issues that are important to children high on her office's



Premier Nosimo Balindlela addresses the audience of children and provincial leaders and NGO partners. Also in photo is Dr. Sibeso Luswata, SACO Programme Officer for Education and one of the child panellists who debated the Premier.



A child raises one of his concerns for the attention of the Premier of the Eastern Cape Province and provincial legislators as a room full of his peers watch.

agenda. She also intended to step up monitoring of government structures charged with the responsibility to look after the interests of children to ensure their safety and security.

The Government was committed to providing children with basic necessities such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing, she said. In education, she pledged, through a newly enacted law, "not to send away children who cannot afford school fees and to provide for those children who have lost their parents."

In acknowledging the long-standing and valued partnership with UNICEF, Premier Balindlela referenced the earliest connections with the children's development organisation in Botswana, "before we had our freedom". That relationship had predated South Africa's transformation, she

said, expressing the hope that the partnership "would remain a strong and viable force for protecting children's rights and ensuring their fullest development".

Supporting creation of municipalities fit for children

The high profile attendance at the launch by the Premier of the Province, 5 Cabinet members of the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature and the national media, helped boost support for the work of the Provincial Plan of Action for Children (PPA) to change the lives of children.

UNICEF South Africa is currently providing technical support for the development of Local Plans of Action for children (LPAs) to help improve the lives of change children in municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province.

Nelson Mandela Foundation and UNICEF launch Schools for Africa campaign

South Africa is one of six southern African countries that will benefit from the Schools for Africa campaign launched by UNICEF, the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Hamburg Society for the Promotion of Democracy and International Law to accelerate access to quality basic education for African children, with special focus on girls, orphans and vulnerable children over the next ten years.

To the Nobel laureate and former President of South Africa, the joint campaign is also a significant contribution to his legacy and vision for the education of all African children and the alleviation of poverty, particularly in the far-flung rural communities of the continent. "It is my passion that every child in Africa goes to school; education is the pathway to freedom, democracy and development", he said, in a taped message to reporters at campaign's launch the Mandela Rhodes Foundation, Cape Town last December.

Full roll-out now underway

Since then, the tragic Tsunami disaster delayed the full roll-out of the campaign as planned. But according to The German NatCom, new developments including a feature video spot with UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Emeritus, Harry Belafonte, calling for support for "Schools for Africa", are now underway. The spot, filmed last December in Berlin will be shown in Germany and other NatCom countries.

"In April we will begin direct mailing to several hundred thousand households and ask for donations, and in the spring we are thinking about the possibility of organising a field trip, including a TV crew to document the efforts for child friendly schools, says Rudi Tarnedin Press Officer at the German NatCom. "In this mailing we will also offer symbolic "bricks" for a donation of 50 Euro", he says, adding that "Peter Krämer, the German ship-owner from Hamburg who initiated the campaign, has agreed to double each donation received up to a certain amount from his private funds." Donors giving a pre-determined minimum amount will also be able to order a miniature brick



Peter Krämer reviews documents with Dr. Dietrich Garlichs, President of the German NatCom and John Samuel CEO of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The joint "Schools for Africa" initiative was launched at the Mandela Rhodes Foundation in Cape Town last December and is now building momentum for a full roll out of activities to support education in six Southern African countries.

with their name, symbolizing their support of the campaign."

In addition, the German NatCom is developing an extended website for the Schools for Africa campaign with symbolic schools that people will be able to watch grow as more donations come in. Visitors to the site will also be able to see their name on the respective bricks after making a donation over the web.

A dream for Africa

In the Schools for Africa campaign, the three partners have joined forces to help ensure the right of every African child to education. To achieve this, a network of partners from local and regional administrations, including UN and NGOs, school committees and corporations is being established. "The most important action is to mobilize responsibility for the proper functioning of the schools as "child friendly" by the villages and communities

themselves," says Dr. Sibeso Luswata, Education Officer at UNICEF South Africa.

How you can help

In the six countries, schools will be established mainly in rural areas. In Angola, for instance, communities themselves build classrooms from burnt clay bricks. UNICEF provides cement and timber and coordinates the work. All the schools will be provided with access to clean running water and latrines. Blackboards, books, pens and benches will also be provided. Training courses and training centres for teachers will be organised to facilitate the learning of new teaching and school management methodology. As well, children's and youth clubs will be established at the schools to keep children informed on prevention and protection from HIV and AIDS infection.

UNICEF, through its national committees world-wide, and the Nelson Mandela Foundation are raising funds for the initiative in contributions to the "Child Friendly Schools for Africa" campaign. A donation of:

- \$1,000 can provide teaching and learning materials for 100 children in Rwanda
- \$5,000 will extend 25 GEM (Girl's Education Movement) clubs and forums in South Africa
- \$10,000 Dollars will establish a village school with two classrooms in Angola; and
- \$100,000 is needed to equip 10 schools in Malawi with latrines and clean water.

To donate to the Schools for Africa project please visit: www.schoolsforafrica.com

South Africa Country Office Website launched

The brand new UNICEF South Africa website, created and produced in South Africa by UNICEF team using the RedDot Content Management System, is now online. The new website spotlights the situation of children in the country and describes UNICEF's work on key issues, including health, education, nutrition and early childhood. Also available are details on UNICEF's programmes in South Africa, information on the newsletter, press releases, contact information; and more.

We invite you to visit our new UNICEF South Africa website:

<http://www.unicef.org/southafrica>

South Africans respond generously to UNICEF's tsunami appeal

Two fundraising classical music concerts organised by students of Pretoria's Step Music School and the Durban Youth Orchestra were among the highlights of unsolicited efforts by ordinary South Africans to support UNICEF's urgent tsunami relief work in Asia and Africa.

"We are impressed and pleased by the generous response of ordinary South Africans, including children, to the desperate needs of children in the countries that have been so devastated by the tsunami. The work of UNICEF and its partners on the ground in ensuring that vulnerable children are protected, receive proper healthcare and continue to go to school, even as the shattered lives and livelihoods of their families and communities are slowly rebuilt, is critically important at this time," said Country Representative Misrak Elias.

At press time, donations in cash received by our country office, had reached some R170,000 for the UNICEF tsunami relief fund, and inquiries were still coming in. Some donors offered services and in-kind donations: while SACO staff ran an in-house auction to raise much needed tsunami relief funds. Still others, a bit more creative in their approach, proposed running advertising campaigns or wished to introduce a variety of products and services to the help children and families who had lost their homes and livelihoods as a result of the natural disaster. Among the more interesting products was a lap desk developed in South Africa that could be used by children who had lost their classroom infrastructure; and a converted 6 meter container for use as a clinic outfitted with 3-4 beds for seriously ill children, storage cupboards for medicines, generator and lights, for the children affected by the Tsunami disaster. The donor also offered to convert and ship the container to destination at their own cost.

Jo'burg Emergency Warehouse responds

In the early days of the disaster, some 8,000 family cooking sets weighing 20,000 kgs., were shipped from UNICEF's emergency stockpile warehouse in Johannesburg to the island nation of the Maldives, which was badly hit by the tsunami. This was just one of a number of emergency air freight shipments, including 5 charter flights from the Copenhagen warehouse that were sent in response to the emergency.



East Africa devastation: A scene from Somalia in the aftermath of the Boxing Day tsunami disaster.

200 South African Schools aim for child-friendly status this year

Is your child attending a child friendly school? According to UNICEF South Africa, a child-friendly school serves children's education needs better. This year UNICEF, working with partners in the national and provincial departments of education, the Nelson Mandela Foundation, and at community level, with NGOs and CBOs, plans to declare some 200 South African schools child-friendly?

So what should a parent or caregiver look for when selecting a school? At minimum, such schools:

- adopt a participatory learning methodology for learning
- ensure a safe and protective environment for children
- provide children with healthy spaces to learn and grow
- ensure that children have access to clean water and sanitation
- are gender sensitive
- have strong links to the surrounding communities, and
- have outreach services for orphans and other vulnerable children.

On-line birth registration now possible in 70 public health facilities

According to the latest update, some 5,000 children have been registered and on-line birth registration is now possible in some 70 public health facilities around the country through a pilot initiative supported by UNICEF.

Birth registration, an important social protection issue for children, now enjoys a higher profile in the three focal key provinces and ongoing efforts at both provincial and national levels to institutionalize the process at all of the country's hospitals, where some 80% of births take place, have been accelerated by government partners. The aim is to chip away at the huge estimates indicating that only 51% of births in South Africa are registered, with particularly low rates in rural areas.

Since it was launched in KwaZulu-Natal in 2003, UNICEF has scaled up its activities to

support an inter-connected approach to birth registration by the provincial departments of Health and Home Affairs. The pilot project for on-line hospital registration, averaging some 650 registrations for every 1,000 births per month is now being rolled out by the Department of Health.

"Birth registration opens doors for children to access social welfare support and services, including the Child Support Grant (CSG)", says Ashley Theron, Programme Officer for Social Policy and Local Governance. "No registration has devastating implications for children infected and affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic, many of whom are left in the care of grandparents or in child-headed households. The Child Support Grant (Rand 170 per month) was recently extended to children under 11 years old in 2004."

New Resident Coordinator is an old friend



Shortly after taking up her new posting as United Nations Resident Coordinator in South Africa and as UNDP Resident Representative, Ms. Scholastica Kimaryo toured UN House, calling on heads of agencies and staff. Ms. Kimaryo was the first UNICEF Representative in South Africa, having established the country office and worked with civil society partners to establish UNICEF's programmes for children, prior to the country's transformation. She is well known by several staff members who were delighted with the impromptu visit. In the photo, from left to right: Misrak Elias Country Representative, Joan Matji, Nutrition Project Officer and Ms. Kimaryo.



SOWC LAUNCH: YOUNG PEOPLE'S REPORT

What children told provincial leaders

Breaking the cycle of poverty is children's number one concern

From the perspective of the children ages 11 to 16, who participated in the inter-generational dialogue to launch the State of the World's Children 2005 Report, breaking the cycle of poverty was the issue that concerned them most. The children should know, since many of them are the troubling face of poverty in the province, coming as they do, largely from the province's children's homes and places of safety.

Providing a safe and protective environment

Providing a safe environment and protection from crime, domestic violence and abuse was also at the top of their list of priority concerns. In a poignant moment during the bi-lingual (Xhosa and English) dialogue, a 16 year-old girl who had been a victim of repeated sexual abuse by a neighbour, expressed the desire to become a policewoman so that she could arrest the man who had raped her.

Care and support for those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS

The children expressed agitated concern over PMTCT and the availability of anti-retrovirals



(ARVs) to prevent the transmission of the HIV virus from mother to child. They highlighted the need for more support for children who lose parents to HIV and AIDS, are often separated from their families and end up as agricultural child labourers on farms. These children also need help to cope with the

financial and social pressures, they said, including stigma and discrimination, that they face at school and in their communities on a daily basis.

The SOWC launch event followed a rapid succession of high profile interventions by UNICEF South Africa in the Eastern Cape province, including participation in the conference on Moral Regeneration, the Youth Movement campaign and stakeholders workshops, and the launch of the Girls' Education Movement (GEM). The launch of the report helped to further strengthen UNICEF's partnership with all sectors, from education to social development, child welfare and justice. In particular, the launch helped to strengthen relations with the Office of the Premier, under whose portfolio responsibility for realisation of the rights of children falls.

The young panellists who presented the children's case were: S. Poni and S. Fanta of the Eastern Cape Girls' Education Movement and M.L. Makewu, Master of Ceremonies, from the Daily Bread organisation, which looks after children living on the street; Nompumelelo Mthetho of the Zwelitsha School of Dance; Ncumisa Thotyana from the Isiah 48 Children's Home; Lindokuhle Njozela, child Presenter on Radio CKI, and I. Casoojee.

GEM Girls take action to help themselves and other children

Dear UNICEF,

My name is Sonwabiso Fanta and I come from the Eastern Cape. I am from King William's Town; to be precise I am from Dimbaza (a location near King). I am 16 years old and I am going to STD 9 this year. I am in a youth group called the Girls Education Movement Eastern Cape and I am also its president.

In December 2004 I attended a function hosted by UNICEF in partnership with the Premier's office, Office on the rights of the Child under the leadership of Mrs. Farida Casoojee from the Eastern Cape. It was the launch of the State of World's Children's report. We were the Program Directors of this prestigious event as we were part of the GEM launch programme in the Eastern Cape.

This was a very important day for us, as the youth, because we were actually the VIP's of the day and we were treated with respect. We were able to express our views towards certain mind-boggling issues, which needed to be addressed. Such issues were; child trafficking, sexual abuse, the lack of a.r.v's in our local clinics and the list is long. We were able to voice our opinions and the people in the panel answered our questions fully and they left us with little confusion or none at all.

There were also children from the street kid's organizations, places of safety etc. These kids were involved in different crime activities and had been in jail. Due to their age they were housed in place of safety. When interacting with them they now regret what had happen to them

and have learnt their lesson. Most of them committed themselves to refrain from such bad activities again. They want to go back home and go back to school. They were even asked what they intend to be in future. Some said they want to be police men, and women, some want to be social workers, some want to be Doctors, nurses etc. This means that the event made a very good impact in their lives.

Though the day was a success in all spheres, we were given shocking statistics about the infringement of our rights all over Africa such as the rights to clean water, education, sanitation, nutrition etc. It is alarming to know the number of children who are suffering due to infringement of their rights. The sad thing is that we are given these rights through our national constitutions and through various other frameworks, but most of all, we are given our rights by the Convention of the Rights of Children which has been ratified by almost all the countries of the world therefore we, as children, should be enjoying more or less the same type of rights but unfortunately this is not so.

The launch was a success and [it] goes without saying how effective it was. We were graced with the presence of many prestigious people whose caliber can not be disputed., such as the Premier of our province Mrs. Nosimo Balindlela, MEC for Education Mr. M. Matomela, MEC for Finance Mr. De Wit and MEC for the Department of Welfare Mrs. Neo Mamase, Superintendent General for Welfare Mr. Mabentsele, Superintendent General for Safety and Security Mr. T. Mafanya and many other dignitaries attended.

ICDB 2004...

It's a first! Young people broadcast their own programmes in Maputoland KZN

The morning of 12 December 2004 kicked off with anxiety and anticipation for a group of young people in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province. They were anxious about this 'big day' and they anticipated good results.

For the first time in the history of community radio stations, young people had the chance to broadcast programmes compiled, researched and written by and themselves. Although there was anxiety and anticipation, there was also an air of confidence that was later replaced by enthusiasm, excitement and exclamations of joy.

There was an equal air of excitement among listeners. Parents, friends and families were close to their radios to witness this historic moment. As young people took over the airwaves, they talked about a variety of topics ranging from children's rights, their views on everyday occurrences around them and many more.

As can be expected from young people's shows, sounds of Kwaito and Hip Hop got the young presenters swaying and hopping in the studios during commercial breaks. Enthusiastic studio callers, also young people, were equally excited about the International Children's Day of Broadcast. One quality that stood out was the confidence and calm on the part of the presenters when they interacted with studio callers.



In Jozini, the young presenters of Maputaland Community Radio went the extra mile. They visited a child headed household on the eve of ICDB. The young presenters listened to the story of their interviewees with empathy. It was evident that they would have loved to do more for the orphans than just share their story on air.

Every year around the world, UNICEF country offices celebrate the International Children's Day of Broadcasting with partners. In South Africa, this turned out to be a spectacular year for ICDB when three community radio stations in KwaZulu-Natal, hosted an event that encourages child participation. Child presenters from both rural and urban areas hosted unique and lively programs relevant to their own areas of abode. There was a balanced measure of gender and ages ranging from 10 to 14 years, and they all underwent intensive training including writing programmes, interviewing, timing programmes, controlling the radio mixer etc. prior to broadcasting.

Fun filled IAJ staff members facilitated the workshops. Child presenters also have mentors who are based at each radio station.

UNICEF South Africa began working on this community radio initiative back in 2003, when the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) formed a partnership with SACO to host the pilot radio project in (KZN). Today, participating radio stations are: ICORA in Eshowe, Durban Youth Radio (DYR) in Durban city - Berea and Maputaland Community Radio in Jozini.

In the past, children were seen and not heard. Now, they are seen and heard!



How you can help GEM Girls help other children in Eastern Cape

Editor's Note: Following the launch of the State of the World's Children Eastern Cape, the GEM girls in King Williams Town submitted their own proposal and plan of action as a result of their heightened awareness of the plight of some less fortunate children. If you can help the girls meet some of their immediate needs, please contact the Editor eKhaya, or SACO's Programme Officer for Education.

Dear UNICEF,

As GEM, we have a long mandate and plan of action and we are hoping that you will help us in whatever way you can. We would love to have ideas on how we could tackle these problems [raised by the children at SOWC].

- Garden Tools and Seeds: We have tried other places who could help us with some garden tools and seeds;
- Renovation of Sports Fields: We [requested] a person who could help with the renovation of the Sports Fields and facilities in order to make the stay of the orphans much more pleasant and so that they could have something to do which is conducive to their success.
- Bursaries to girls for maths and science study: We would like also to check if UNICEF could assist us by providing bursaries to disadvantaged girls who want to pursue their studies further, especially those who want to study math's science and technology, but not to reject requests from the rest of the girls who want to do other subjects.

We know UNICEF is committed in assisting in our education. We have also submitted our proposal to the Premier's office and we are waiting for the response. We have also been to the SG of Social Development and we are still waiting for his answer as well. We are taking action to better ourselves and our country. We are thankful to UNICEF for its commitment in building the future leaders of our country, Africa and the World at large.

Artists, activists and young people celebrate Bob Marley's 60th birthday

The Africa Unite symposium hosted by the Bob and Rita Marley Foundations was held in Addis Ababa from 2-4 February 2005. The event brought together intellectuals, artists, activists and most importantly, youth from across Africa and the African Diaspora to discuss African unity. The young people were encouragingly vocal during the symposium. On the last day, the young people presented ten demands and ten pledges on African Unity, highlighting the critical areas of interventions for young people's development as well as capitalizing on their strengths as agents of change for the African continent.

The young people's greatest contribution during this symposium was their delivery on ten demands and pledges that they delivered on the last day of the symposium and this was received and applauded by the intellectuals, artist and dignitaries attending the symposium. Although at some stages I felt that the participation of the young people were leaning towards tokenism - their presentation of their demands and pledges made the delegates sit up and take notice. The challenge now is for these demands to be filtered down to country level and to be

taken into account in the run-up to the African Development Forum (ADF) to be held in Addis in June.

The young people also had the opportunity to hold discussions with, and to be briefed by representatives from the Economic Commission for Africa in preparing for the ADF. It is worthy to note that the theme for this years ADF is Youth and Leadership, and as you will notice, leadership is one of the key focus areas inherent in their demands and pledges. In fact, a representative from the Marley Foundation has referred the ten demands and pledges as the Ten Commandments and we trust that on a country level we will be able to drive this process forward through our partnership with the National Youth Commission who has identified local policy development for youth as a priority for 2005.

The symposium culminated on the 6th of February in the 60th birthday celebration concert of Bob Marley, with performances by



Gerrit Maritz, Project Officer, Young People's Development and HIV Prevention, with Cidella Marley, daughter of Bob Marley and Portia Phalaphala, at a briefing session on Cidella Marley's new book on the prophecy of her father. Gerrit, along with a couple of young people from South Africa, attended the Africa Unite Symposium hosted by the Bob and Rita Marley Foundation in Addis Ababa from 2-4 February 2005.

Ziggy and Rita Marley and UNICEF's Goodwill ambassador Angelique Kidjo. Thanks to efforts by UNICEF, South African artist Yvonne Chaka Chaka also joined the line-up of international stars and is said she is looking forward to forming sustainable relationship with UNICEF to support children's rights.

Young people at Bob Marley Youth Symposium list 10 demands and pledges

Addis Ababa 4 Feb. 2005... *Young people delivered their top 10 demands and pledges on the last day of the Bob Marley 60th birthday Youth Symposium held in Addis Ababa, es. According to UI ICEF Project Officer for Youth and Adolescence, Gerrit Maritz, that got the attention of the delegates. "The challenge now is for these demands to be filtered down to the country level", he says.*

1. *We demand the reconstruction and redefinition of the role, responsibility and structure of the African Youth Parliament in order to gain a greater representation of African youth and our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora. We would like greater visibility of youth matters and to seek the effective implementation and sustainability of programmes that address youth issues*
We pledge our support to achieve an accountable and responsible African Youth Parliament that seeks to address good governance through youth participation at all levels towards unity and the development of the African continent
2. *We demand access to quality and free primary, secondary and, where possible, tertiary education in order to employ ourselves and gain knowledge and skills for the development of our countries and continent*
We pledge that each one will teach one and that all skills will be used in our continent for our continent for the benefit of all Africans
3. *We demand that our history be told and shared with our children and our children's children and generations to come. We want the voice of past youths in the struggle for freedom and equality to be told by Africans for Africa*
We pledge to learn from our elders and to emphasize the positives of being African in our communities and to mobilize other youth to unite in Africa through our history
4. *We demand the empowerment of women and gender equality in all sectors of African society – political, cultural, social and legal*
We pledge that we will immediately as young women and men in Africa, improve the position of women and reduce the vulnerability of girls in our African communities in a spirit of togetherness as daughters and sons of Africa
5. *We demand peace and reconciliation. We insist that our brothers and sisters in armed conflict be free from guns and persecution and that their right to live their lives free from violence be upheld, including the rights of marginalized African communities to be treated fairly and to live in freedom*

We pledge to advocate for peace and prosperity in our communities and countries and to resist violence through our actions and to create dialogue in reaching peaceful resolutions to conflict

6. *We demand that the voice of our young brothers and sisters living with HIV and AIDS be heard and integrated in our continental response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We demand appropriate and quality youth friendly HIV and AIDS services and health care facilities, free access to anti-retroviral therapy, nutrition and care and support for orphans and vulnerable children in Africa*
We pledge our support to African youth living positively with HIV and AIDS and to fight stigma and discrimination so that those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS can live their lives in dignity. We pledge to reduce the number of new infections through creating networks of peer education.
7. *We demand that African culture be preserved and free from negative foreign influences and that African culture be promoted and protected within African youth and the illumination of negative cultural practices that keep women and young people suppressed and vulnerable to HIV and AIDS*
We pledge to promote African culture through our lifestyles, music, traditional performance and dress and to develop new literature and other artistic expressions that portray our rich cultural heritage in a positive way
8. *We demand effective and progressive leadership in the African continent and governments that walk the walk and not just talk the talk*
We pledge to lead by example and to hold our leaders accountable to their actions and promises
9. *We demand a positive African identity that is portrayed to the rest of the world, an African identity that remembers the struggles of the past and that is looking to a bright future*
We will support Pan-Africanism and our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora and will become renaissance youth that will lead Africa to a prosperous future
10. *We demand multi-level resources such as technical support, materials and skills from local, national and international governments and development organizations to achieve our dreams of unity, peace and prosperity for African youth and children*
We pledge to be accountable for all our actions and develop responsible plans of action for implementing sustainable development of young people in and from Africa

SACO staff supports Lotus Children's Home

By Siphelele Chingono



His big bright eyes were full of confusion, not knowing the last time he saw his long lost mother. The little boy, aged two years, clung to my chest when I gave him a hug. I could feel his little heart longing for a mother's love, something that he probably could not even remember – it was so long ago that he had felt it.

The children at the Lotus Children's Home were thrilled to see our friendly and caring faces as we entered the room where some 200 of them were watching television. The home is a normal South African "location house", in which Mama Mary, the founder of Lotus Children's Home had been living in until she decided to bring the children in.

Founded in 1975, the home is still run by Mama Mary with the assistance of a few people from the surrounding community. The women help with the cooking and the washing. There is also another plot where the boys live. Mama Mary is planning to build a bigger home for the children on the plot, but she admits that that will depend on assistance from the public. For now, the plot has a big garden in which the boys grow a variety of vegetables, which they supply to the Pick 'n Pay supermarket once a week. They also provide produce to the children's home's kitchen where their meals are prepared.

In 1994, the home was brought to the attention of the public. When we visited the home last November, the number of children living there, who came from all manner of backgrounds, stood at 201 and their ages ranged from 2 to over 18 years. One of the eighteen year-olds had lived in the home since infancy! Current residents include some babies as well as homeless, abused and or abandoned children from dysfunctional families. Many have been orphaned by AIDS, or have lost their parents.

After the "home was brought to the attention of the public" different organisations and individuals began to offer support the children, and some concerned people collected children from time-to-time over weekends, to visit their homes, just to provide the kids with the experience of a homely environment and to show them that there are many people out there who care.

UNICEF policy only allows us to visit homes like this. However, we often can't help them and become attached to groups of children. So, a few SACO staff members have planned to visit the Lotus home again to see in which areas they may be able to offer more assistance to the children.

According to Mama Mary, their greatest needs are for food, clothes and school uniforms. She manages to put the children in school and to get the school grants with the help of social workers, but the money is not enough to provide uniforms and shoes for all the children; some just have to go without.

Some children do have parents who are illegal immigrants in South Africa, other parents have passed away, leaving their children without parental care. Yet other parents just simply disappear.

The Lotus Home also offers refuge and serves two meals per day to destitute members of the surrounding community, who are without food or any source of a livelihood. Mama Mary depends on the handouts and donations that she receives from people and organisations wishing to assist the children at the home. Her loving and caring spirit is amazing. "What I have we share," is the motto she lives by. I was deeply touched by the children's love and respect for her, as if she were their own mother, and I was moved by their innocence and their love for one another.



Condolences



SACO deeply regrets the passing of our dear colleague and friend, Mr. Frans Claassen, who left us on Saturday, 26 March 2005, in Tehran, Iran. A national of the Netherlands, Frans joined UNICEF in August 1982 and served as Contracts Officer, in the South African Country Office from 1999 to 2003. Frans will be greatly missed by all of us. He is survived by his wife Alice, and their children, Virgil, Louis and Antony.

Well done!



To Lawrence Makeleni, our Registry Assistant, on his well-deserved achievement in successfully completing his Diploma in Storekeeping and Stock Control. We are proud of Lawrence and his accomplishment which will facilitate easier access and more orderly flow of office materials to our staff.

Bon voyage!



To Andrea Berther, our former JPO from Switzerland, whose beautiful photos of children and communities often graced the pages of our newsletter and monthly lobby exhibit, and who has left SACO for Abéché, Eastern Chad to take up the position of Emergency Education Officer. "Chers collègues, amis et amies, I personally want to thank you all for the great two and a half years in South Africa as it has been a phenomenal learning curve and a fabulous country to discover!" she says.

Staff consultation room opens

The long-awaited staff consultation room (No. 616, located right next door to Yvonne's office) opened officially on 28th February.

The new multi-purpose room will also serve as place of rest for staff members who may be feeling under the weather. In addition, plans are afoot to make the room child-friendly, equip it with playthings, so that children who sometimes have to come to the office will also have a space to play outside of their parent's office.

BOOKS

The State of the World's Children 2005

The State of the World's Children 2005 focuses on childhood, defined as the state and condition of a child's life. The Convention of the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, offers a new definition of childhood based on human rights. Yet for hundred of millions of children, the promise of childhood outlined by the Convention already appears broken as poverty, armed conflict and HIV/AIDS threaten their survival and development. The report examines these three key threats, offers a comprehensive action agenda to combat them, and calls on all stakeholders to reaffirm and recommit to their moral and legal responsibilities to children.

Girls, HIV/AIDS and Education

Providing good-quality basic education and skills-based prevention education is fundamental to reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, particularly for girls. Girls are at greater risk of contracting the disease, bear a disproportionate share of its burden and comprise the majority of new infections globally. Yet, because of persistent gender disparity, they are often denied an education and thus protection against infection. This joint project with The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, provides graphic and tabular evidence that links sexual knowledge / behaviour and educational level among young people. It outlines three priorities that support schools in protecting girls and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS: getting and keeping girls in school; proving life skills-based education; and protecting girls from gender-based school violence.

Media Wise: Children make a difference

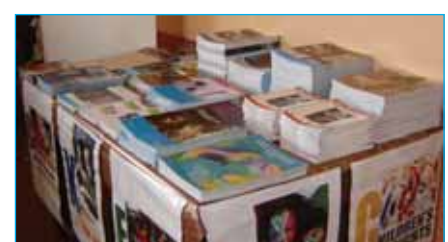
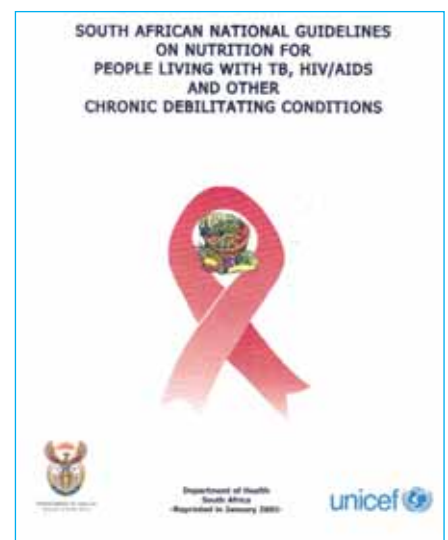
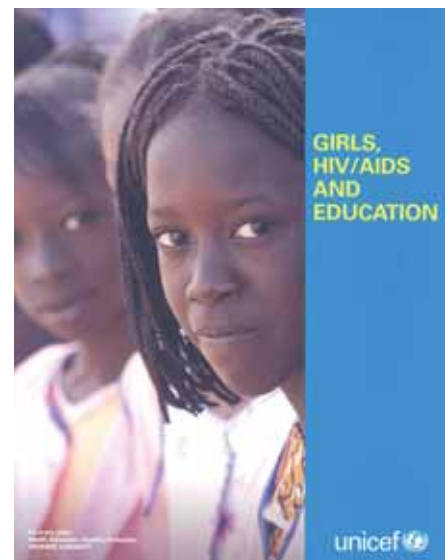
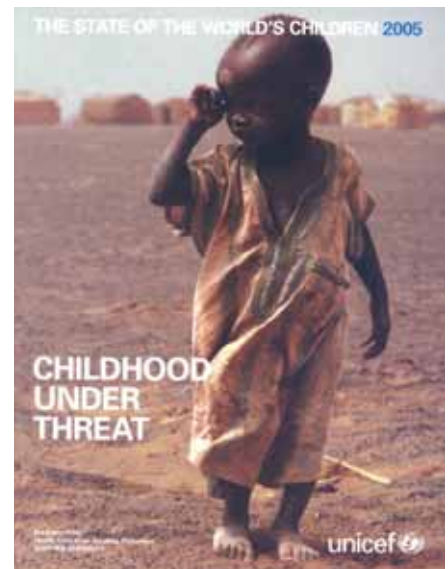
The children's participatory process is an exciting and key component of the Empowering Children & Media (ECM) project, which aims to improve the representation of children and children's rights in the news media. The report focuses exclusively on the methodology used for the children's participatory workshops. The information in this report may be useful for organisations and individuals who plan to promote children's participation in their research, policies and interventions. Children's opinions and contributions are valuable and must be accessed on issues that affect them. The report illustrates both the necessity and the benefits of children's participation.

Children: Dying to make the news

An analysis of children's coverage in the South African news media is a key component of the Empowering Children & Media (ECM) project. In 2003, 36 news media were monitored by over 3 months to see where children appeared in the news, who they were, what they said and what they were doing. The key results are included in this book.

South African national guidelines on nutrition for people living with TB, HIV/AIDS and other chronic debilitating conditions

The effects of HIV on the nutrition of a person infected with the virus are numerous. These effects follow a number of pathways, depending on the stage of the HIV infection. Health and nutrition depends on the stage and severity of the HIV infection. It is known that good nutrition can contribute to the wellness and sense of well-being of the person with HIV/AIDS at all stages of the disease and may even prolong life. Nutritional advice and support of people living with HIV/AIDS is therefore an important part of their care. The Nutrition Guidelines are intended for use by people living with TB, HIV/AIDS and chronic debilitating conditions and those who are in a position to guide them to better health.



New arrivals!

It's a boy for our former JPO Tine and her husband Anders Mortensen! Baby Albert, now four months old, arrived on Wednesday 22 December 2004 at 10.15am, weighing 3280g and measuring 51cm. Proud and happy new Mom Tine told eKhaya: "Everything went perfect and the stay at the hospital was amazing - not counting the food. We are slowly easing into the parent mode and "get" what parenting is all about, but also how fantastic the experience is - who ever said a newborn is boring"

To Ashley and Crystal Theron, parents of baby Ashton Ryan Theron, who arrived on Tuesday, 19 April weighing in at 3,5 kg. Says proud papa Ashley, "Crystal and I are very happy with the latest addition to the Theron family, Ashton Ryan, another boy. We will, however, not complete the Soccer Team as this baby will be our last."