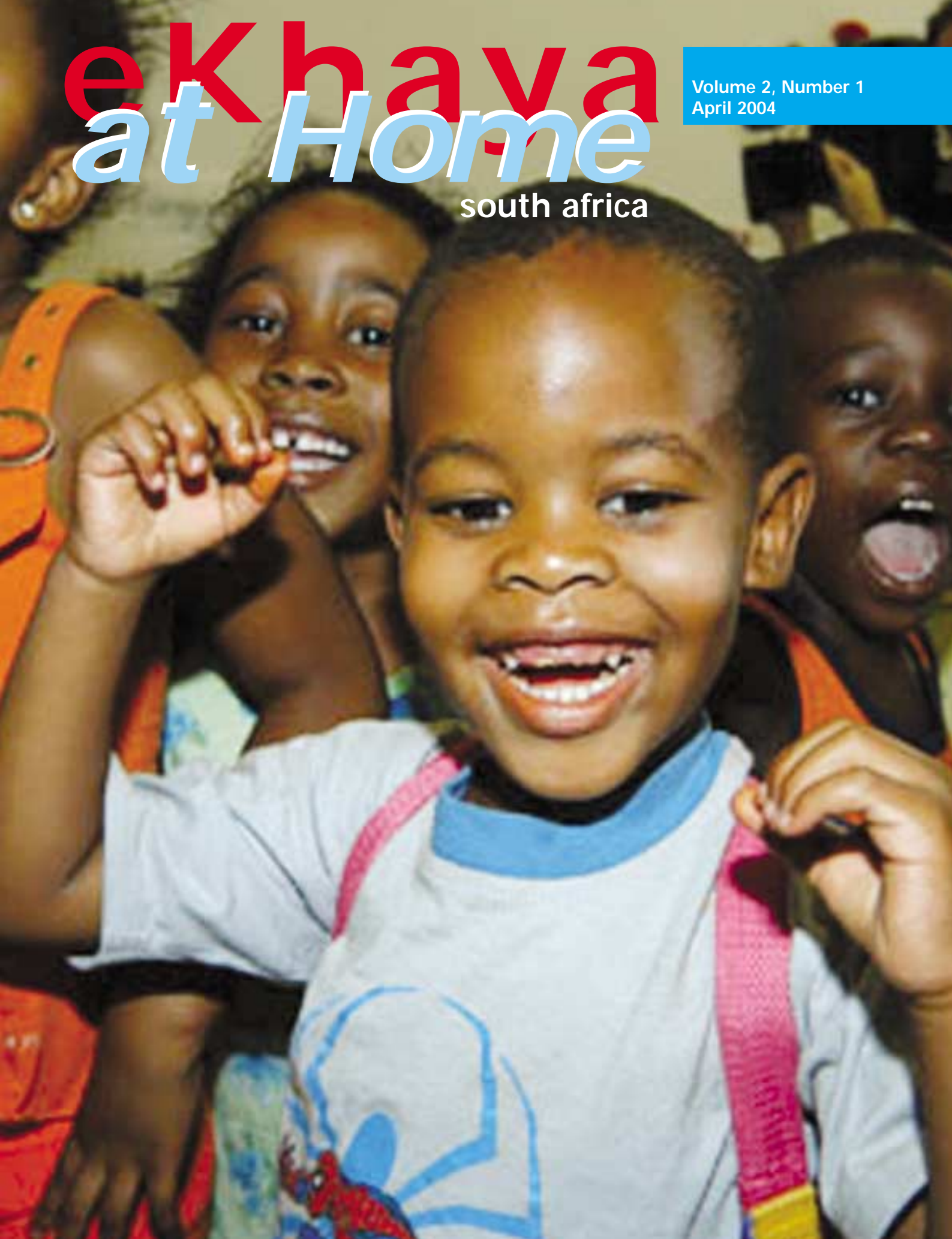


eKhaya *at Home* south africa

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

unicef 



Front cover:
Greeting Lord Puttnam:
Young children at the
Lapeng Child and
Family Resource Service
welcome the UK
NatCom President with
a song.

EDITORIAL

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UNICEF and 10 years of democracy in South Africa

One of the more memorable things about Johannesburg, other than the fact that it was built upon a glittering seam of gold and hard labour is that it is the location of the Constitutional Court, arguably South Africa's grandest achievement. But Constitution Hill, the site of one of apartheid's most notorious prisons and detention centres and now the site of the Court is more than just a location overlooking the country's commercial heartland. It is also a symbol of struggle, of memory and forgiveness and a living testament to transcendence and transformation.

The Court itself is the country's foremost legal institution that safeguards and monitors the democratic rights and freedoms embodied in South Africa's Constitution and Bill of Rights offering all citizens the opportunity to claim rights that may be denied. Noble Laureate and former President Mr Nelson Mandela inaugurated the Constitutional Court officially on South Africa's Human Rights Day this month. It couldn't have happened at a better time than during the anniversary to mark the 10 years of South Africa's participatory democracy – a euphoric time for celebrating hard won victories and a time for reflection and review for South Africa, her supporters and friends.

For the United Nations in general and UNICEF in particular it is a privilege to be counted among democratic South Africa's friends and allies. Prior to the first democratic elections of 1994, South Africa had provided the world with extraordinary lessons in partnership development to mobilise against the oppressive apartheid system. It was during this time that UNICEF cooperated with the exiled liberation movements to support women and children and subsequently with the Mass Democratic Movement inside the country. This relationship provided the opportunity to work with South Africans to foreground the rights of children and place it firmly on the agenda at the negotiating table. That South Africa's

children now enjoy fundamental rights protected in its Constitution is a tribute to that process and the country's leadership and political will to build an inclusive culture of rights.

However, strategic shifts and policy advances did not emerge from negotiations alone but from a long process of collective and individual struggle and sacrifice. In the immediate transition to a democratic order children, youth and women led mobilisation efforts to assert their rights to full citizenship, rights that have not only informed the Constitution but that have influenced policy and legislative development. Free primary education, access to health care, the creation of the Youth Commission, the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Gender Equality and an emphasis on integrated sustainable development are among some of the most significant advances.

UNICEF's formal relationship with the government began with the development of a transitional programme (1994 – 1996) that provided the time to carry out a number of studies that would identify UNICEF's support for the first five-year programme of co-operation.

The programme supported the country's move away from the burdensome baggage and struggle against apartheid to the struggle for transformation within a democratic framework by supporting knowledge strengthening for child-focused development through technical assistance and catalytic funding. Much of this was linked to the policy and legislative review process and outcomes that impacted on children. Clearly, this would not have been possible without a partnership between a dynamic civil society, the recent anti-apartheid mobilisation efforts fresh in their memory, and the commitment of the country's political leadership. The Children's Desk in the Deputy Presidents' Office was born out of this strategic partnership and was

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IN FOCUS



WANTED: Protective environments for children

Although South Africans from all walks of life have rallied around the fight against child abuse and have condemned the victimisation of children, the level of abuse, particularly sexual violence against children remains sky high.

Hearings by a Parliamentary Task Group on the Sexual Abuse of Children held last year, showed that although South Africa has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and, in 2003, became a signatory to the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, children's right to protection from exploitation, abuse and violence is still being violated. Many homes, schools, neighbourhoods and communities have to a large extent, ceased to be protective environments for children.

All children have the right to grow up in an environment that ensures their safety and good health. A protective environment ensures the fulfilment of this right. Unfortunately, for children in far too many communities this remains a challenge.

Creating a Protective Environment

What does it take to create a safe and protective environment for children? The first and most important approach is the prevention of abuse. Many times when the word "prevention" is mentioned, it is associated with long-term efforts that may be seen as idealistic and unattainable. This is far from the truth. In fact, many opportunities do present themselves daily for prevention to become a reality. Here are some examples that could be integrated in the delivery of services and programming for children and families:

Family support services

A mother that leaves her infant or small child with strangers may be putting her at risk of abuse and may also be seen as irresponsible. However there is the other side of the coin. With the arrival of a new baby, some parents, particularly those that are young, single and poor, often lack parenting skills and may not be knowledgeable about how to access social services. They may also feel a sense of social isolation and alienation that can lead to loneliness and low self-esteem, often exacerbated by their poor circumstances. Meaningful family support that reaches out to families such as these in times of crisis can help. For example, "crisis child care services" can be drawn on to take care of children so that parents do not have to resort to leaving them with strangers or potential abusers. The formation of "respite care" and friendship

continued on page 4



10 years of democracy (from page 2)

directly supported by UNICEF. This structure played a significant role in the establishment of the National Programme of Action for Children Steering Committee and paved the way for the existing Office of the Rights of the Child in the Presidency.

Unfortunately, nothing could have prepared the government and its national and international partners for the unanticipated new risks and vulnerabilities that have emerged post the euphoria of 1994. Increasing globalisation, poverty, violent crime, HIV and AIDS, violence against women and children, growing numbers of orphans and child headed households have become rallying points for focused and concerted action to strengthen the positive gains made and counter the dangers that threaten the best interests of all, but particularly those of children in the new democracy.

The UNICEF programme of Co-operation (1997 to 2001) was the first full five-year programme following the first democratic election of 1994. By now, most people are aware that the South African legislative and institutional framework is one of the world's most supportive of the rights of the child. It is acknowledged by the government that the current challenge is to successfully decentralise authority and resources to the local level.

UNICEF's current country programme (2002-06), through close consultations with government and civil society partners, has sought to respond to the risks that have emerged, particularly in the priority areas of HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support and violence against women and children. The spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is a complex, multidimensional issue. As such, responses to this serious challenge must

also be multidimensional. UNICEF's worldwide experience and institutional capacity and orientation provide a comparative advantage in providing support in addressing particular dimensions of the HIV/AIDS problem, particularly in the areas of gender and gender-based violence.

UNICEF will continue to support the National provincial and local government to implement a Programmes of Action for Children that are informed by a human rights approach that speaks to the changing dynamics of transformation --transformation threatened and exacerbated by economic inequality, HIV and AIDS, gender violence and competing national, continental and global imperatives. To this end, we will work within the framework of South Africa's constitution, the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals and those set by the Special Session on Children in A World Fit for Children.

South Africa has shown that it is only through partnerships and mobilisation efforts that we will be able to work together to create an enabling environment so that communities and children themselves can develop the capacity to make informed choices in order to advance their freedoms in an evolving constitutional democracy.

In UNICEF we are proud and pleased to be associated with the Anniversary of 10 years of democracy and will ensure that it produces impressive results as we look to South Africa's children and adolescents as active partners in our quest to advance humanity in the best interests of the child and ultimately in the interests of us all.

groups within the neighbourhood is another way to help relieve inexperienced and stressed mothers.

Home visitation programmes

The concept of home visitation is always associated with social workers and health professionals and can conjure up images of families experiencing authoritarian inspections and check-ups. Yet home visitation services are a common-sense approach to supporting families and extending friendships, and they create opportunities for educating and supporting needy parents. The innovative part of home visitation services is that they can make a range of community and professional services available to families. Experience in South Africa has shown that when a multi-disciplinary team of social, health, child and youth care workers and lay counsellors visits a family the development impact on the family is maximised. Home visitation also helps break down the isolation experienced by many parents and provides opportunities for the early intervention and early detection of other problems.

Promoting positive parenting

There is a need for a strategy that promotes the "little things" that parents can do by acknowledging and building on what they already know in order to turn their home into a safe and protective environment for children. Some of these little things include giving your child a hug and a smile when he or she comes home from school, spending time listening to a child talking excitedly about what happened at school and sharing moments of laughter or story telling. Praising your child and acknowledging his or her strengths instead of scolding him is another sure way to build the child's self-esteem and a feelings of being safe, loved and protected. Pamphlets and posters promoting these "little things that parents can do to create a safe a protective environment" could be distributed in all 11 official languages and would go a long way towards developing positive parenting in our communities.

Communities doing it together

Finally, the African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child", epitomises the importance of the community, especially at neighbourhood level, in the upbringing of children and young people. Families exist within communities and so community structures are ideally the first level of support outside the family. The South African model of family preservation introduced the concept of community conferencing" which embraces the contribution that every neighbourhood organisation, group, formal and informal, traditional, professional or volunteer, can work together to put children first. It requires that they ask "how well are our children doing in this locality?" and that they then pool all the resources they have to take care of all children in that locality and to ensure that no child is left out.

A basket

of protection services includes:

- Positive parenting behaviour
- Volunteers who accompany children to school to ensure their safety
- Neighbourhood friends to visit with families
- Mentoring programmes for families in need
- Skills training to access social services
- After school care for children
- Safe places for children to play or stay or do homework until their parents come home
- Neighbourhood watch programmes to monitor the safety and well-being of children, investigate issues, inform parents of potential dangers and take appropriate action when necessary
- Mapping of community assets, including people who have special skills, time and resources that can be used to assist children parents
- A mobilised community with strong partnerships between families and the government, health, education, business, religious and political sectors working together to create an enabling environment for all children.
- A convergence of local resources with the added value of government or other external social services.

Kami goes to the bank



Kami, a five-year old HIV-positive South African Muppet who lives on Takalani Sesame and Gary Knell, President and CEO of Sesame Workshop, visited the World Bank recently to share with Bank staff how to harness the power of "edutainment" for reaching young children and enhancing early childhood development. Bank staff, as well as more than 200 participants from government, local media and youth-serving organisations from seven African Countries connected through a video conference, listened to Takalani Sesame Workshop's efforts on teaching HIV/AIDS prevention and destigmatisation of the disease. Since Kami debuted on Takalani Sesame in 2002, she has been named a global "Champion for Children" infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS by UNICEF's Executive Director, Carol Bellamy.

Creating a Protective Environment: How UNICEF helps

At the national level, UNICEF is working to strengthen its partnership for child protection with the Department of Social Development and to identify priority issues for support. Among these are the drafting of a child abuse strategy and policy; training of multidisciplinary teams on the management of child abuse; and advocating for psycho-social support for abused children.

UNICEF also works closely with national NGOs with a priority focus on child protection - ACCESS (Alliance for Children Entitlement to Social Security) in the reprinting and dissemination of an updated manual on accessing child support grants; and RAPCA (Resources aimed at Preventing Child Abuse) in the completion of A Healer's Manual for Caregivers of Abused Children – to address gaps in availability of psycho-social support services in the country. As well, in the Nkandla local municipality in Kwa Zulu-Natal, the development of a local plan of action (LPA) including a strategy to address child protection issues is nearing completion.

The Fatherhood Project exhibition opens

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and UNICEF co-sponsored an exhibition entitled The Fatherhood Project: Promoting Men's Care and Protection of Children, in Pretoria recently. The exhibition featured professional photographs of men in poignant real-life situations with their children as well as a collection of powerful images taken by children.

Applauding organisers of the exhibition, SACO SPO Rina Gill said, "The over-supply of reports and images of child abuse and gender-based violence often makes us forget that even today in South Africa, there are still more boys and men who are not violent and not abusive, than those who are. The Fatherhood Project Exhibition demonstrates how we can take examples of positive deviance and create new images and definitions of masculinity and fatherhood", she said, noting also that "when fathers get involved with raising children, both fathers and children benefit".

Goodwill ambassador news

- UNICEF celebrated its 50th anniversary of advocacy last December at a gala hosted by Whoopi Goldberg in Los Angeles.
- Popular Latin singers and songwriters Ricky Martin (Puerto Rico) and Shakira Colombia) have joined the roster of UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors.
- Mia Farrow plans a visit to Somalia to participate in National Immunisation Days for polio and to celebrate the country's moving off "the endemic country list".

Take time to listen to and smile for your child.



Private donor boosts US Fund support for OVCs in Kwa Zulu-Natal

Four UNICEF-supported child and youth-friendly programmes in rural Kwa Zulu Natal are set to receive much-needed support from the US Fund at the request of a private donor. The projects are Soul Buddyz Club at Camperdown Library, Pinetown Highway Welfare Project, Malanga Senior Primary School, and Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation (ZCBF). All four are dedicated to protecting the rights of some of the most vulnerable children in the country and to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS among adolescents and young people.

Following their fact-finding three-day visit, Mr. David Bossy, his daughters Caitlin and Lauren and son Connor, accompanied by US Fund president Chip Lyons, pledged his support to help the four projects to do an even better job by strengthening their present interventions and developing communication strategies and information materials to tell their stories.

The Bossy family was especially captivated by the outreach done by 9-12 year-old children of the Soul Buddyz Club at Camperdown, facilitated by the assistant librarian James Zondi, who led the family on a tour to meet children from nearby impoverished communities who are also members of the club.

Reacting to the donation, Donique de Figueiredo, Social Mobilisation Officer of Soul City who has special responsibility for the Buddyz Clubs, said "Soul City is extremely excited and proud of the children of the Camperdown Buddyz Club who have made this lasting impression on the Bossy family. This is one of our newer clubs, and the children, who are from an under resourced area of the country have set a wonderful example of leadership and compassion for our new democracy. We will honour these children in a very special way," she said.

The Camperdown Buddyz Club members have created a supportive and enabling environment for even younger and poorer children of the unemployed farm labourers from nearby communities. Their activities have given new life to the library and have introduced hope and joy into the lives of small boys and girls who walk long distances, up and down hills to visit the club to share in the wonder of books, educational and social activities at the library.

The Camperdown Soul Buddyz programme has also caught the eye of the Camperdown municipality, which is looking more closely at stronger interventions for children in the locality's Integrated Development Plan.

A youth-led initiative to prevent violence against girls is another of the projects set to receive support from the Bossys. Located at Malanga Senior Primary School in Empanjeni, the child-led programme is organised by the NGO, CRISP in partnership with school principal Lydia Kekana and her team.



"Making melodies in my house" Children at a crèche in KZN supported by the Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation, sing their favourite song for the visiting UNICEF delegation. The crèche and other child friendly interventions for OVC's are to receive support from the US Fund for UNICEF through the Bossy family.

The new programme offers support and protection to children in the school population made vulnerable by the loss of their parents, stigma and discrimination or the high levels of violence against women and girls prevalent in the province.

The Bossys were also impressed by the dedication of the young people and adolescents who conduct the HIV/AIDS peer education counselling drive in communities around their base at the Pinetown Highway Project. The project will receive support, as will the OVC care and support component of the Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation (ZCBF) run by programme director Erna Steynberg. This project

supports a crèche for disadvantaged children, community food and herb gardens, and training for a cadre of home-based workers who administer care to HIV/AIDS patients, among several other interventions.

SACO Representative Misrak Elias has expressed appreciation to the Bossys and the USD Fund for the generous donation, noting that it will help make a difference in the lives of very deserving children. "Our next step is to share the learning from these projects with similar initiatives in KZN and other provinces and to help our partners scale up and become more effective in their work", she said.

A child friendly school

- Is gender sensitive for both girls and boys
- Protects children; there is no corporal punishment, no child labour and no physical, sexual or mental harassment
- Ensures that children are learning and not being preached at
- Involves all children; families and communities; it is particularly sensitive to and protective of most vulnerable children
- Is healthy; has safe water and sanitation, with separate toilet facilities for girls
- Teaches children about life skills and HIV/AIDS
- Develops children's self-esteem and self-confidence free of bias from teachers and parents.

Prompt relief for Madagascar



SACO Procurement Centre Staffers, from left, Frances Baek, Gary Saunders and Abigail Maphosa join visitors on a tour of the UNICEF emergency stockpile facility on opening day at the Röhlig Grindrod warehouse near Johannesburg International Airport last November.

General Assembly sets 2007 for follow-up to Special Session on Children

The General Assembly has adopted a resolution on the follow-up to the Special Session on Children, deciding that the commemorative plenary will take place in the year 2007.

In adopting the resolution, GA President Hunte reminded delegates that when world leaders convened at the UN General Assembly's Special Session on Children in May 2002, they had committed their governments to a time-bound set of specific goals for children and young people, and to a basic framework for getting there.

The Outcome Document of the Special Session, *A World Fit for Children*, along with the Millennium Development Goals pledged to by all 189 UN member states and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most universally ratified human rights treaty, and its optional protocols, constitute an essential guidebook for all those working to improve the lives of children and young people throughout the world, Mr. Hume said. The adoption of the current draft resolution "will take us all a step forward in keeping the promises of world leaders who have set themselves an agenda that is at once both visionary and concrete, to better the lives of children and young people."

Children in Madagascar got prompt relief following the devastating damage caused by cyclone Gafilo which battered the Indian Ocean island in March.

Thanks to the strategic location of the Jo'burg emergency supply warehouse, opened last October by Director Alan Court, the Supply Division immediately shipped emergency relief goods valued at over \$100,000 to assist children and families via a specially chartered cargo plane.

Among other items, UNICEF shipped 150 tents, "school in a box" kits for eighty children, collapsible water containers and tarpaulin sheets and ropes for shelter. UNICEF Madagascar estimated that some 10,000 children under the age of five and 2,500 pregnant and lactating women were affected by the cyclone, which is said to have caused extensive flooding.

Children are particularly at risk during emergencies. In Madagascar, due to rising water levels and the decreasing availability of safe drinking water, the risks range from falling sick with diarrhoea and malaria to becoming increasingly malnourished. Thankful for the safe arrival of the much needed cargo from Jo'burg, Misbah Sheikh, Communication Officer at the Madagascar country office said, "Now our attention turns to ensuring that children do indeed get the supplies."

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in the world. Despite its great natural wealth and development potential, 73% of its population (World Bank 2002) lives below US\$ 1.00 a day.

UK Committee President visits

He is a famous movie producer with ten Oscars, twenty-six academy award nominations and numerous other film and television accolades to his name. But it was children on the mind of Lord David Puttnam, the President of the UK Committee for UNICEF, when he visited South Africa during the height of Oscar week, on Tuesday 2 March.

Taking time out from a short Cape Town vacation with wife Lady Patsy, the NatCom president spent the afternoon with UNICEF programme staff and British Airways partners at the Lapeng Child and Family Resource Centre located in Joubert Park in the heart of inner city Johannesburg. Lord Puttnam wanted to experience at the ground level, the impact of the generous funding by British Airways on the lives of the children and young people in the UNICEF supported model projects in the park.

Lord Puttnam showed more than passing interest in the inter-sectoral projects – the Youth Empowerment Network linked to Lapeng, the Greenhouse Project, and the Johannesburg Art Gallery. Noting the importance of the arts and culture in the development of a nation, he commended the once famous art gallery, which still houses an impressive collection of nineteenth century South African art and notable old masters, on its efforts to rehabilitate itself by reaching out to the Gauteng's school and youth groups.

Young art enthusiasts now fill the rooms most afternoons, sketching busily and bringing much needed youthful energy and enthusiasm back into the halls of the old gallery. Through its partnership with Lapeng and the Youth Empowerment Network (YEN), both of which share knowledge and best practices, the art gallery has stepped up its outreach efforts to bring in more people, including foreign tourists.

"It is always an honour to receive UNICEF dignitaries at our centre. Lord Puttnam's visit was particularly insightful, said Leon Mdiya, Director of the Lapeng ECD project. "He asked questions that made us reflect on our work and the approaches we take. But he also shared some insights from his wealth of experience which was useful food for thought for us and our partners in the park," he said.

Highlights of the visit included a walk across the park for the UK NatCom President, the Representative, SACO and British Airways staffers, after which the team visited with children participating in the afternoon art programme under the shade trees at Lapeng.

Lord David Puttnam spent 30 years as an independent film producer. His highly acclaimed films include *Midnight Express*, *Chariots of Fire* and *The Killing Fields*. He retired from film production in 1998 and now focuses on his work in education. He was elected President of UK Committee for UNICEF in July 2002.



Lord David Puttnam, President of the UK Committee for UNICEF (centre) with staff from UNICEF South Africa and its partners Lapeng Child and Family Resource Centre and the Youth Empowerment Network visit children in Joubert Park, Johannesburg on 2 March. From l-r are Carol Liknaitzky, Youth Empowerment Network, Yvonne Duncan, Misrak Elias UNICEF Representative, Lindy Tsats, Lapeng, André Viviers, Rina Gill, Ashley Theron, UNICEF, Mothibedi Nkite and Leon Mdiya, Director, Lapeng



My experience in the development of International youth policy



By Millet Nkanyane , Age 16, Grade 10 Ga-Thoka Village, Mankweng District, Limpopo.

I was fortunate to be given an opportunity of attending a workshop on the development of an International Youth Policy from National Youth Policies in process or completed from

African countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe and others in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 23rd to 26th September 2003.

This was my first experience to participate in discussions relating to the purpose, design, implementation, and evaluation of a National Youth Policy considering Policies which are in existence from other countries or those still in the process of development.

The main highlights were:

- What are the needs of the youths?
- Were the youths involved?
- Do the youths understand what benefits the policy will create for them?
- Are they supporting the development, implementation, and the purpose?

I understood that, the youth policy must address the needs and challenges facing the youth today in their growth and development for a better future.

This is in short the information I brought home to share with my colleagues, youth club members and peers, and the message is: "Let all young people support our country's National Youth Policy as it is one of those in existence and functioning."

My action plan started in Addis Ababa at the National Hotel where I joined a group of

youths hanging around the hotel and motivated them to know their rights and responsibilities to design and direct their future.

From our conversation I came to note their problems; they explained that boys only go to school to become taxi drivers while girls get children to earn easy money....what a notion to live for?

This opened a serious discussion of what changes they could as youths make in their lives for a better future , they came up with an idea of teaming up to form a youth club and make their voices heard by those in power and developing programs to generate income.

At home I am prepared to set the pace in our village by forming home-help groups, identifying needy families, girls and boys who are not attending school and assisting them by referring them to the Department of Welfare social workers and to health workers who can assist them.

I have developed a strong will of community development in particular the youths their present challenges and their future lives / careers.

The Youths need mobilisation to drive and shape their future.

I thank you!

SOWC 2004 launch

attracts record number of visitors to www.unicef.org

The 11 December launch of The State of the World's Children 2004 report on girls' education and development attracted a record number of visits to the UNICEF website. Between the launch and 19 December, 27,386 pages were viewed, already more traffic than SOWC received during the entire month of December in the previous three years.

Children from the Afrika Cultural Centre Media Group interview Thami Mseleku, Director General in the National Department of Education, during the launch of SOWC 2004.



Girl child gets reasonable education in South Africa



Precious makes her point during the launch of SOWC 2004 on girl's education.

*Report by Precious Ramushu
Grade 11 - "Star of Hope School" -
Hammanskraal, Gauteng
on the launch of the State of the World's
Children, 2004*

On 11 December 2003, a number of very excited children gathered at the Goethe Institute in Johannesburg. Under discussion were girls, their education and their development - especially in developing nations. It is/was such a crucial issue that people in high authority were willing to talk to learners. We were a little disappointed that the advertised guest, Mr Kader Asmal, Minister of Education, was unable to come. Luckily there was a representative.

Children and adults spoke and asked questions. It appears the girl-child gets a reasonable education in South Africa. Statistics seem to bear this out. A high percentage of girls is enrolled at schools. The questions are though - do they complete their schooling? Do they feel successful? Are they successful?

The splendid day in the sun allowed all of us to realise again how important co-operation is.

Editor's Note: Precious Ramushu one of the panel of eight children and young people who debated the issue of girl's education in South Africa with Thami Mseleku, Director General in the National Department of Education and a panel of education and children's rights experts. She is also one of the winners of the Model UN competition for schools.

Coming in the next issue of eKhaya:

What's new in community based IMCI?

What's in a Name? – A new book celebrates indigenous names.

Children's views on the News – What are the top ten issues raised by children?

Launch of SOWC 2004:

Abolishing fees would let down education system, but no child should be excluded because of fees, says Mseleku

A panel of children, ages 12-16, challenged Thami Mseleku, Director General in the South African National Department of Education, to action that would ensure that school fees are not a barrier to education for primary and secondary school children, especially girls, during an inter-generational dialogue to launch the State of the World's Children, 2004 in Johannesburg.

However, Mseleku said for South Africa, abolishing fees would let down the education system and argued that the challenge was to make sure that no children were excluded because of fees. "There is no free education; someone has to pay for it," he said. "But fees should not be a barrier to education and our legislation says no child should be denied basic education because he or she lacks funds."

Mr. Mseleku, a forceful, last minute stand-in for Education Minister, Professor Kader Asmal, easily engaged in the lively debate with the children who pressed their concerns. He stressed that parents also needed to subsidise some education costs, "as the State cannot pay for everything." One of the children, Precious Ramushu, also expressed concern that abolishing school fees would decrease the standard of education.

One hundred and ten international and national press, children, UNICEF partners and top girls' education and children's rights specialists packed the Goethe Institute auditorium in Johannesburg to witness the children's interventions and participate in the open dialogue that followed. Prior to the debate, Misrak Elias, UNICEF Country Representative, summarised the main points of the SOWC report. "South Africa is a shining example of high enrollment and access to education," Ms. Elias said. South Africa's gender parity index for Grades 1-2 equals 1 and the country boasts almost full enrollment (97.4 per cent) for both boys and girls.

Challenges to ensuring a quality education for girls, however, do remain. Ms. Elias cited poverty, girls still lagging behind in maths and science and cultural issues such as gender discrimination and domestic responsibilities for girls and violence against girls in schools as issues, raised by children themselves that are of special concern.

ABOUT US



TRAINING NEWS

Learning, growing and leading by example

Following on the team building session held in February 2003, the Dream Team outcome document called attention to staff morale and levels of conflict that prevailed in the office. In response, the decision was taken to run a training session focused on conflict management and assertiveness skills and the Leading By Example workshop was born.

With the guidance of external consultant Anne Heslop, a two day session for all staff was arranged around the theme of taking responsibility and being the master of change in one's own circumstances. The objective was to get each person to the level where he or she could bring about beneficial and significant change in their work environment as they saw fit. According to Anne, in order to bring about change, we need to be aware of what we want as well as what we do, reflect on particular communication styles that are unproductive and then focus on what is productive.

Day one zeroed in on insight and personal learning, whereas day two dealt with skills development and application. Here, the personal branding exercise was introduced as a tool to help colleagues identify their own personal style in order to get their message across. Focus was also given to learning assertiveness skills and how to bring about change by developing influencing skills and learning by watching colleagues performing in a series of amusing and poignant mini dramas using their own personal styles.

The two-day programme provided an opportunity for each person to take time for personal reflection, consider alternative approaches to situations and challenges, and then by using these skills, embrace the self-empowering choice of growth through positive enriching life decisions and organisational contributions at any given moment. The challenge to the team was to apply these skills and experiences in the workplace. The effectiveness of the change would then be evaluated in a one-day follow-up session five weeks later, when every member of the group would make a presentation to smaller groups or in plenary on the changes they had brought about in their immediate work environment.

A highlight of the workshop experience was the evaluation of personal communication styles which allowed for meaningful discussion as a means of identifying the appropriate style when faced with certain situations in the workplace. Colleagues also did communication exercises showing ways to get the correct message across. One of the points illustrated was that what is in your head is not necessarily in the head of the person to who you are communicating! This was followed by a conflict management session showing how to identify one's own style of dealing with conflict and exploring effective ways to do that. The workshop concluded with an interactive exercise in appreciation, whereby staff gave and received feedback to each other on appropriate behaviour.

The Leading by Example process will be complemented this year with the arrival of P²D (Personal and Professional Development), which will be rolled out to all UNICEF offices world wide. Yet another personal challenge will be investigated through this process as well as looking at coaching and counselling skills. Meanwhile, the Training Committee will consider how to incorporate the skills into our daily working lives and make recommendations for CMT consideration. Stay tuned.



SACO was the proud host of the Regional Staff Association meeting outside Pretoria recently. The meeting featured participation by Global Staff Association Chief Dr. Agostino Paganini, ESARO Director Per Engebek (fourth from left) and South Africa Country Representative Misrak Elias (left). On the last day of the meeting the group said "cheese" for SACO staff photographer Andrea Berther of UNICEF South Africa.

LOSS

Death roared into my life

*And stole the colour
from the world*

*Reducing it to emptiness
and pain.*

*My friend got torn from
the world,*

Torn from the past

Torn from the present

And torn from the future.

*Now I have to stagger
blindly on*

*Each breath, a fugue of
pain.*

*Every minute, a
symphony of exquisite
agony*

*(A tribute to a friend and
colleague who died of AIDS)*

By June Madingwane

New learning opportunities

A number of exciting learning opportunities are in the cards for 2004. We started with the Secretarial and Programme Assistants training in late February, providing an opportunity to upskill all PA's and Secretaries in office administration skills. Next comes the regional office Emergency Preparedness training for all staff, followed by another regional course on the Programme Planning Process for the programme staff and selected operations staff. Later in the year all staff will go through P²D training. We look forward to yet another challenging, learning and growing year in 2004!

Rep, staff reflect on 2003 and challenges for 2004

Welcoming everyone back after the long holiday break, SACO Representative Misrak Elias congratulated the staff on its team building initiatives and achievements last year and urged them to work towards an exciting and productive new year. Ms. Elias was speaking at the year's first USASA annual general meeting at our Pretoria Office.

Although UNICEF's mandate was to work towards the development of women and children, she said, social responsibility was the purview of all of us. In particular, she noted the staff's contribution to the Leamogetswe Children's Home in Pretoria last December, which had helped to provide a positive experience for the dispossessed children living there.

Accountability, Personal Responsibility and Good Practice

The year 2004 would be one of many challenges, Ms. Elias said, stressing the need to manage ourselves, exercise personal responsibility and accountability, and build good practice. Despite some significant lows last year, Ms. Elias singled out some of the highlights of the country programme, in particular the greater engagement of partners with our work. She commended the programme staff for the high level of participation of both partners and children in the Annual Review process as well as systemic partnership building and resource mobilisation efforts that had occurred throughout the year.

Ms. Elias reminded staff members to aim to work as a team in order to better achieve their goals, and urged all staff to become more active in statutory committees, such as the Joint Consultative Committee. Staff members could contribute to the efficient management of the office, she said, by being mindful of time management, learning about the statutory committees by studying their terms of reference, and holding elections to select representatives.

The year would also be special for SACO because we will have the opportunity to assess our work and make adjustments for the coming years by means of the third-quarter combined Medium Term and Annual Reviews. These activities would precede the country office's Programme Budget Review (PBR) submission to be made in 2005. However, in order to meet SACO's immediate requirements, a mini PBR submission would be presented this year, she said.

Responding on behalf of the staff, outgoing president Mokone Nakedi said that the SACO "Dream Team" had achieved most of its many goals and that staff morale had greatly improved as a result of the Team Building and Learning by Example workshops. One way to keep that spirit kindled was for staff members to make every effort to make personal contact with each other rather throughout the year.

USASA elects new Executive Committee



SACO ombudsperson Andrea Berther with Global Staff Association president Agostino Paganini.

eKhaya congratulates the new members of the Executive Committee.

Chairperson: André Viviers
Secretary: Chrislene Rajgopal
Treasurer: Carol Mohamed
Members: Rien Gotink
Joan Matji
Walter Makakase

Congratulations also to Andrea Berther and Daniel Sekhoela, the new SACO Ombudspersons



eKhaya says:



Thank you and well done! to Mokone Nakedi who has just completed his term of office as USASA president.

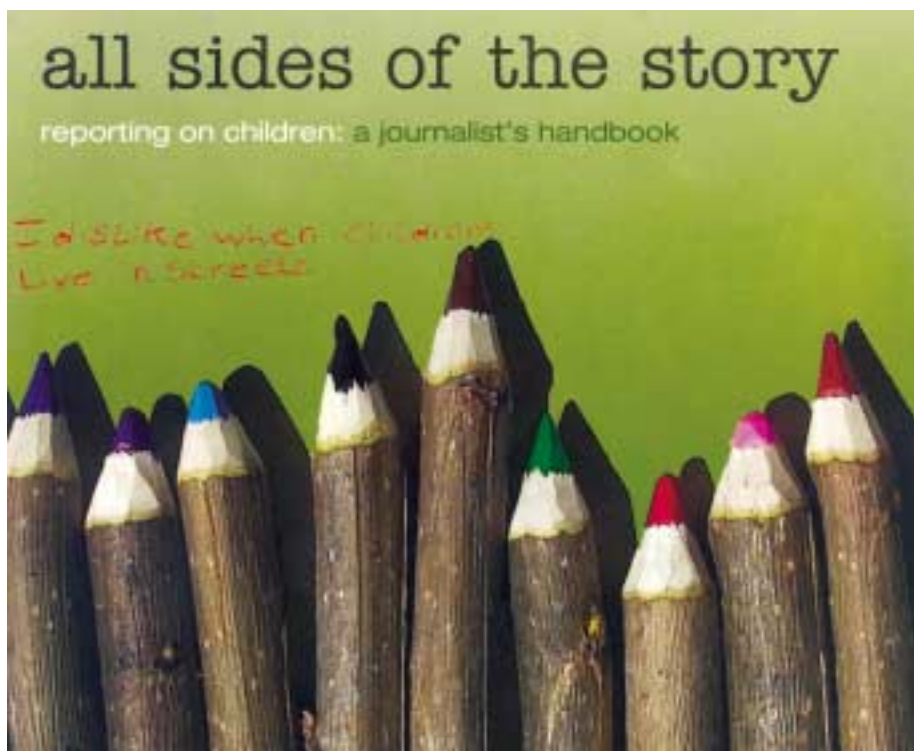


Bon voyage and best wishes! to HR Officer Nicky Lamb, a regular contributor to this newsletter with her Training News column.



Congratulations! to Erika Vegter, new Mom of Baby Xera who arrived on 11 February.

BOOKS



All sides of the story reporting on children: a journalist's handbook

This handbook, written by a working journalist presents the complex questions around reporting on children raised and debated at a seminar on Reporting Child Abuse in the Media, hosted by UNICEF and the Media Monitoring Project in 2002. It makes use of contributions from media experts, journalists, children's rights experts, the legal fraternity, NGOs and Government. In addition, the South African National Editor's Forum, the National Association of Broadcasters and the National Prosecuting Authority endorse it.

One of the aims of this handbook is to promote a human rights-based approach to reporting on children; reporting which respects the rights of children as well as the policies and legal framework that protect children. The handbook provides a much-needed framework for balancing some of the most complex ethical dilemmas media professionals are likely to face.

Finally, the handbook suggests ways to navigate those dilemmas in a practical and user-friendly format. The many guidelines drafted worldwide on the subject of reporting on children and issues impacting on children are outlined and are tailored to the South African experience.

Adapted from, All sides of the story published by UNICEF and the Media Monitoring Project, 2003.

New in the KRC

Malaria: A major cause of child death and poverty in Africa

Malaria is crippling Africa's economic growth and perpetuating vicious cycles of poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa, malaria affects mostly young children, accounting for some 20% of all child deaths. This publication outlines the key actions UNICEF, along with its partners, must take to control the malaria burden in Africa.

What world leaders can do about HIV/AIDS

This information kit, jointly produced by UNICEF, UNAIDS and the World Conference of Religions for Peace, appeals to leaders of various faith communities to use their influence, moral leadership and resources to alter the course of the epidemic. This kit has been tested and reviewed by religious leaders in Africa and Asia, and by other representatives of faith-based organisations and networks.

Just released



WHO/UNICEF Joint Statement on Reducing Measles Mortality in Emergencies

To reduce the number of measles deaths and interrupt transmission of the measles virus during and after complex emergencies this statement advocates for urgent, structured and coordinated supplementary immunization activities, together with vitamin A supplementation.

UNICEF at a Glance

Author: UNICEF

Price: Free

No. of pages: 26

Publication date: 2004

Publisher: UNICEF

Languages: English (French, Spanish)

Stock: 180

This most recent update of UNICEF at a Glance provides the who, what, why and how of UNICEF, in a succinct and reader-friendly format. Included are up-to-date statistics on the health, social and economic issues facing children that impede their healthy growth and development. Also included is a timeline that lists key events since the organisation's inception in 1946.

