A partnership for quality education
A partnership for quality education

The Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross primary enrolment rate</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary attendance rate</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Parity Index (primary)</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary completion rate</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary gross enrolment ratio</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 7–15 year-olds who are out of school</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Education in South Africa

The power of education to transform societies cannot be underestimated. Education breaks the generational cycles of poverty and disease and is key to a nation’s development and prosperity.

Quality education equips and empowers boys and girls with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives, protect themselves against HIV and shape the course of their communities.

Girls in particular benefit tremendously from a rights and gender-based approach to learning, which empowers them to challenge gender discrimination and take charge of their lives.

South Africa has the ability to transform the education sector into one of the continent’s best. The groundwork has been laid: the country had adopted the approach of education for all, and development and reform initiatives towards these goals are integrated into national strategic plans, policies and programmes.
Primary schooling is compulsory for children aged 7 to 15 while an integrated approach to early childhood development aims to give all children between birth and school-going age the best start in life. A No-Fee Schools policy has abolished school fees in the poorest primary schools across the country, helping to attract poor, orphaned, disabled and vulnerable children to school.

Education is one of the highest national priorities. The government invests huge resources in the sector. Early childhood development saw its share of total government expenditure rise from 0.5 per cent in 2003/4 to 1 per cent in 2008/9. Expenditure on primary and secondary education alone represented 5.2 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product in 2007/08.

As a result, children’s access to basic education is extensive and most children stay in school at least to the end of the primary cycle. Girls’ education is one of the main achievements of the post-apartheid education system, with girls and boys enrolling in school in almost equal numbers. Educational opportunities for children from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are now considerably better than before.

Challenges to quality education

While South Africa is very close to achieving the Millennium Development Goal on universal primary education and gender equality in education, the education system struggles to deliver quality education. Many children experience a broken journey through school, interrupted by irregular attendance, absent teachers, teenage pregnancy and school-related abuse and violence. South Africa’s high levels of poverty continue to deny thousands of children access to quality education. Around 27 per cent of public schools do not have running water, 78 per cent are without libraries and 78 per cent do not have computers. There is limited provision for pre-school and special education.

What is the life-cycle approach?

The life cycle is a powerful concept for understanding children’s vulnerabilities and opportunities for investing in their welfare. Human development during childhood and youth is not a uniform process; there are sensitive periods during a life cycle. Any significant harm that happens during these times is likely to produce particularly severe and often irreversible damage. These critical stages in a child’s life also provide windows of opportunity to improve children’s health, growth and emotional and intellectual development.
The majority of children between birth and four years do not access to quality early childhood care and learning. Formal and regulated day-care centres and pre-schools only reach 16 per cent of young children.

**What UNICEF is doing**

The UNICEF Education and Adolescent Programme addresses three important stages in a child’s development, based on the life cycle approach.

- **Early childhood – children between birth and six years**
- **School going years – seven to 12 year-olds**
- **Adolescence – 12 to 18 year-olds**

The programme pays particular attention to early childhood. Research has found that the first three years of life are the most critical for a child’s physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Investing in the early years is an investment in a country’s future workforce and capacity to thrive socially and economically.

**Early Childhood Development**

Many South African communities have been torn apart by HIV and AIDS, leaving young children without proper care and protection. UNICEF’s support to early childhood development focuses on:

- Strengthening the abilities of parents, grandparents and other caregivers to support the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of babies and young children,
- Designing community-based early childhood development and support programmes for poor and vulnerable children and their families,
- Developing strategies to include babies and young children living with HIV in social and educational programmes.

**Child Friendly Schools**

UNICEF plays a critical role in helping South Africa move towards a vision of quality and inclusive education. This is especially important...
given the many difficulties children face in going to school and getting a good education.

With UNICEF support, the Department of Education developed the Safe, Caring and Child Friendly School Framework to increase access, retention, completion and learning achievement for the most vulnerable children, particularly girls. The framework also promotes life skills for HIV prevention, psychosocial programmes, community participation in schools, and improved school environmental health and safety.

The framework is an organising construct. It helps to put into practice education related policies and the Convention on the Rights of the Child so that all children in South Africa can benefit from a quality education. The framework links to the National Education Monitoring Information System through an accreditation mechanism.

Adolescent Development

Adolescent Development focuses on life skills for children and young people. The programme works with the government and civil society organisations to develop policies and programmes that empower young persons, especially girls, through innovative and sustainable life skills and sport programmes.

The programme is also tied to the child friendly framework by supporting extra curricular activities in schools. The involvement of parents and other community members is central to this initiative. Children and adolescents need adult support as they learn skills to stay HIV free, protect themselves against rape and abuse, and improve their livelihoods.

Emergency Assistance

UNICEF provides technical assistance during emergencies, including assessing humanitarian needs and developing a rapid humanitarian response. Support to children’s early childhood development and education throughout the recovery period is a priority.
What UNICEF plans to achieve

While small means have resulted in significant achievements, UNICEF is seeking long-term investments from donors to take the quality and provision of basic education and early childhood development to the next level. By 2011, the Education and Adolescent Development programme aims to:

- Expand coverage of the child friendly school programme to 32 per cent of all public schools and increase access and retention of orphans and vulnerable children in school.
- Provide early childhood development services to 50 per cent of children under the age of five at household level, 30 per cent at community level and 20 per cent at centre level.
- Bring life skills to 50 per cent of children and adolescents.

Funding Gaps (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Funding Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Child-Friendly Schools</td>
<td>$13,976,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
<td>$1,737,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Development</td>
<td>$1,725,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education &amp; Adolescent Development Programme (overall)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$17,438,932</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As percentage of total requirement:  
- Available funding  
- Expected funding  
- Funding gap
If you are interested in supporting the UNICEF Education and Adolescent Development programme, please contact:

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Child friendly schools
The South African education system was ravaged by apartheid. Today its legacy is seen in the mass of impoverished and run-down rural and townships schools that cater to the majority of African children. Opportunities for better education are limited to a number of well-resourced former white state schools. Low exam pass rates, school dropout, violence and sexual abuse in schools as well as teenage pregnancy and HIV infection are tragic consequences of the deep inequalities in school communities.

What is UNICEF doing?

Schools are an important personal and social space for children. Children are natural learners but their desire to learn can be easily undermined and destroyed by the many hardships they face on a day-to-day basis. For children to stay in school and successfully complete their education, schools must be physically safe, emotionally secure and child-focused places.

UNICEF is working closely with the National Department of Education and civil society to develop holistic models for dramatically improving schools. These models are part of the Safe, Caring and Child Friendly School Framework—a set of six principles to transform schools by providing quality education, safety and access to education for girls, orphans and other vulnerable children.
What has been achieved?

Until recently cows, goats and local community members used to walk freely through the grounds of Tree Top Farm school in deep rural Kwa-Zulu Natal. But a community partnership with the local police, the private sector and a number of NGOs installed electricity, burglar bars and a fence around the school. Now children and teachers can feel safe and schools can remain clean.

Tree Top Farm school is one of the country’s 500 most ‘at-risk’ school communities where the child friendly school programme is being piloted. The programme progressed from 25 model schools in 2005/06 to 800 in 2009. The plan is to roll out the child friendly model to 5,000 of the 26,000 public primary and secondary schools by 2010, reaching 3.75 million school children.

The lessons from the model schools were used to develop national child friendly school implementation guidelines and an accreditation system. The Department of Education is revising the National Education Management Information system to include child friendly school indicators against which quality standards can be measured in all schools.

- A UNICEF-supported leadership training programme for teachers, school managers and other education authorities is helping to improve the way schools are run and quality education delivered.

- The Department of Education together with UNICEF is developing guidelines and policies on student/teacher attendance and on child-friendly classrooms, sport and play fields, school toilets and bathrooms, and school security.

- The National Nutrition Programme was evaluated with UNICEF assistance, resulting in better programme planning and monitoring as well as the expansion of the programme to benefit three million children across the country.

Going forward

Child friendly schools give South Africa a real opportunity to turn around the education system. The next step is to evaluate the impact of the model and use the results to design a costed national plan to scale up the programme. The plan will be included in the government’s Medium Term Expenditure Plan to make sure that there is enough funding to expand the child friendly school model to all schools in the country. UNICEF will continue to provide direct support to selected schools, invest further in school leadership training and help review policies and implementation on school funding norms.

A child friendly school is:

1. Rights-based and inclusive
2. Academically effective
3. Safe, protective and caring
4. Health promoting and seeking
5. Gender-sensitive
6. Builds linkages and partnerships with its community
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Sport for development

unite for children

UNICEF
Schools are meant to be heavens of peace, learning and recreation for children. But many townships and rural schools are in a sorry state, with no playgrounds or sport fields. With little to do after school, it is not surprising that teens resort to risky behaviour and easily fall into a cycle of HIV infection, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and violence. Young people are considered to be the drivers of the AIDS epidemic in South Africa. Around 2.5 per cent of boys and 6.7 per cent of girls aged 15–19 were living with HIV and AIDS in 2008.

What is UNICEF doing?

UNICEF recognises that sport and play can be powerful vehicles for working with disadvantaged and vulnerable children. Regular physical activity is essential for the physical, mental, psychological and social development of children and teens. Sport is also an ideal entry point for child, youth and community programmes. This is the concept for ‘sport for development’ – that sport is not just an end in itself, but also an effective tool to achieve goals in health, education, gender equality, HIV and AIDS and child protection.

UNICEF has teamed up with the Department of Education to bring Sport for Development to more than one million children in over 700 needy schools. The plan is to build 63 multi-purpose sport halls and fields – one for every cluster of 14 schools. The approach is part of the Safe and Child Friendly School programme that works to transform schools into safe, healthy and child-friendly learning environments.
An important focus of the Sport for Development programme is to empower boys to adopt healthy lifestyles and prevent HIV infection as well as help reduce school violence through the avenue of sports.

What has been achieved?

The programme is in development and presents donors with a unique opportunity to help take it forward. Comprehensive activities are planned and need funding:

**Mobilising school communities**

For Sport for Development programmes to be successful, it is essential that the communities surrounding the schools participate in, and support the programme. Municipal youth workers, local sport clubs, teachers, school management teams and governing bodies and Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs will be trained and coordination of their work improved.

**Working with youth networks**

Peer education clubs such as Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs will also be recruited to implement and lead Sport for Development programmes.

**Learning through play**

Young people need easy-to-use guidelines and support materials to effectively manage peer-driven sport programmes. Similar guidelines are essential for educators and community partners to incorporate life skills in curricular and extra curricular activities. Areas such as managing sport-based programmes, training coaches to mobilise boys against violence and abuse of children and women and sport training routines will be covered in the manuals.

**Spreading the message**

UNICEF has a strategic partnership with SuperSport, the biggest sport channel in Eastern and Southern Africa. SuperSport broadcasts a weekly programme on children’s sport events. The aim is to use this exciting platform to advocate for children’s right to play, showcase the Sport for Development programme, broadcast documentaries made by young people and support the UNICEF Children and AIDS campaign. UNICEF also works with partners to distribute soccer balls to under-privileged schools through SuperSport’s corporate social responsibility campaign Let’s Play A Million.

**Leaving a legacy**

The 2010 FIFA World Cup has brought a huge global sport spotlight to Africa and South Africa in particular. UNICEF and partners aim to focus this spotlight on the lack of sports/play fields and equipment in a majority of South African schools, townships and rural areas – a major obstacle for school and community-based physical education and sports programmes. Where sports facilities exist, many are dilapidated and dangerous for children, particularly girls and disabled children. Mobilizing support for schools and communities to refurbish or establish safe multi-purpose playing fields and leverage other partnerships to provide soccer balls, nets, bats and other sports supplies, are key objectives. Engaging children in structured play and organized sports in schools and communities across the country now, is the best way to leave a legacy for development beyond 2010.
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Girls & boys education movement
One of the most disturbing barriers to girls’ education is the violence and abuse they experience at home, in schools and their communities. Gender-based violence threatens to undermine international and national campaigns to get girls in school and keep them there so they can complete their education and leave with the skills needed to succeed in life. HIV infection, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and other risky behaviours also have a negative impact on girls’ education.

Boys play a big role in what happens to girls. They themselves need support to become the best they can be, protect girls from harm and adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. Boys and girls need to get involved in issues that concern them and work together as partners in their own development.
What is UNICEF doing?

UNICEF’s technical expertise is helping the Department of Education to coordinate the Girls Education Movement in South Africa. The movement was first introduced in Uganda in 2001, followed by a launch in the South Africa in 2003, where is it known as the Girls and Boys Education Movement.

The Girls and Boys Education Movement provides African children and young people a platform to make the best of their potential. It gives them access to skills and information, helps them to mobilise their communities to support the rights of girls, and provides a space where they can discuss issues that matter to them.

In South Africa, the Girls and Boys Education Movement is part of the country’s efforts to transform society and redress the wrongs of the past. The initiative hopes to create leaders of tomorrow with non-sexist attitudes and values.

What has been achieved?

An overwhelming achievement for the Department of Education and UNICEF was putting girls’ education on the government’s agenda. In doing so, the three major threats to girls’ education – gender inequality, school violence and HIV and AIDS – were addressed through different approaches:

- With UNICEF support, the Department of Education reviewed gender-based policies and trained its national and provincial department staff to implement them.
- A national training programme on child rights, prevention of school violence, HIV and AIDS education and youth participation was carried out. Life skills education, including HIV awareness and prevention, is now part of the school curriculum and is supported by extra-curricular Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs.
- Thousands of teachers and peer educators were trained to be responsive to girls’ and boys’ issues, prevent substance abuse, violence and HIV infection.
- Guidelines for establishing and managing Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs were developed and distributed to more than 10,000 schools in 2009. A teacher’s guidebook helps teachers support the movement.
- National Girls and Boys Education Movement camps are held every year with young people participating from all nine provinces and other African countries. Participants share experiences, showcase club activities and brainstorm ways of overcoming common challenges.

Boys and girls join forces

Fifteen year-old Bethuel Mthopo is an example of a new generation of boys who treat girls with respect. A member of his school’s Girls and Boys Education Movement club, Bethuel believes that girls and boys need to work together and find solutions to their problems. “It’s through the club that we were able for the first time to listen properly to what girls think and feel about us.” His club broadcasts messages about rape, HIV prevention and gender issues on a local radio station. The young club members are now confident to tackle issues that were previously taboo.
Going forward

The Girls and Boys Education Movement is a major force in improving school life and empowering girls and boys to make better choices for themselves. UNICEF welcomes contributions to keep the momentum going. Funding is needed to:

- Conduct a national audit on the Girls and Boys Education Movement clubs
- Establish provincial structures to support the continued roll out of the Girls and Boys Education Movement
- Publish a newsletter
Early childhood development

There are 4.4 million babies and infants in South Africa. Most of these children live in communities where their survival and development are at stake. Poverty, crime, violence and HIV and AIDS are daily realities for these children. Many poor parents and caregivers are too stressed or ill equipped to look after their young children properly. They need support to be the best parents they can be and give their children the best start in life.

Investing in early childhood development reaps tremendous benefits for the future of individual children, families and society as a whole. Studies show that when young children, especially those between birth and three years of age, are given proper care and stimulation, they are more likely to survive, grow healthily, do well at school and become productive adults.

Children’s access to formal day-care centres and preschools is still low but the government is taking steps to improve this. It has drawn up a National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development and increased its spending on the sector. Around 90 per cent of children under the age of one are fully immunised. Child mortality, however, is still high.
What is UNICEF doing?

Giving children the best start in life means making sure they are healthy, eat nutritious food, drink clean water, play and learn. It also means protecting infants from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

Only a complete package of services for families and communities can address the many needs of young children. This is why UNICEF has partnered with the government to provide a holistic and integrated early childhood development programme at the home, childcare centre and community level.

What has been achieved?

**Improving services at ground level**

The Department of Social Development with UNICEF support is piloting an early childhood development programme for vulnerable children in 10 sites in seven provinces. This involves using family facilitators and early childhood development practitioners to bring an integrated package of services to homes and community-based early childhood development centres.

UNICEF is working with the Departments of Social Development, Education and Health to develop a national implementation plan for this approach. A key area will be building national and local government capacity to manage and implement programmes. UNICEF will support the development of a fundraising strategy, resource materials, leadership and technical training, and a monitoring and evaluation system.

**Training parents**

A national parenting programme was developed to train literate and illiterate parents and caregivers on appropriate play, health, nutrition, hygiene and child safety. UNICEF is providing technical support to form a team of national master trainers that will roll out the programme nationwide.

**Children with special needs**

UNICEF supports research and the development of best practice to address the special needs of babies and young children living with HIV and other chronic illnesses. Resource materials and a training programme were developed to train early childhood development practitioners to support families and communities in looking after these vulnerable children.

Going forward

Early childhood development is an area where UNICEF has seen impressive progress in political commitment and concrete plans and strategies. However more needs to be done, in particular scaling up integrated early childhood development services. UNICEF is seeking funds to:

- Develop government’s capacity to manage integrated early childhood development services.
- Train family support workers to assist vulnerable families with young children with a wide range of services such as social grant applications, healthcare and access to early childhood education.
- Train early childhood development practitioners in young child health, nutrition, learning, protection and management of early childhood development programmes.
- Support policy reform on community and centre-based approaches to early childhood development in line with the National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development.
- Review and finalise early childhood development funding norms.
- Finalise and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework.
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Technogirls

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South Africa has a skills crisis. Though there is a shortage of skills across the board, skills in science, technology and engineering are especially lacking. According to Merrill Lynch, South Africa’s economy has to create between 510 000 and 740 000 jobs a year to meet its target of halving unemployment by 2014. However unemployment remains high and young people leave school without the necessary competencies to meet employers’ requirements.

The government launched an intensive drive to harness and improve skills. Yet to study and become qualified in fields such as science, technology and engineering means good grades in math and science, subjects in which South African students do poorly. South Africa ranked the lowest of 45 countries that participated in the 2003 Trends in International Math and Science Studies assessment for grades 4 and 8.

Girls are at a disadvantage when it comes to technical professions. They are not encouraged to study or do well in traditionally male-dominated subjects such as math, science and technology. This compromises their future career opportunities and resigns them to lower paying jobs.
What is UNICEF doing?

The Department of Education, with UNICEF support, started the Technogirls mentorship programme in 2005. The initiative, which is part of the Girls and Boys Education Movement, helps girls make informed career choices, with an emphasis on science, technology and engineering.

Technogirls identifies high achieving 15–18 year old school girls from disadvantaged communities, especially those coming from rural areas. The girls are placed in corporate mentorship and skills development programmes where they also benefit from academic scholarships. Career mentorship is important as it helps the students link what they learn at school with the skills needed to succeed in the business world.

What has been achieved?

Sixteen-year old Zoliswa Yoyo spent two days at INVESTEC, an international specialist banking and financial group. She learnt that she could one day work in credit control, fund management or share trading, professions she didn’t even know existed.

“Technogirls has given me the most precious treasure for the future,” says Zoliswa, “I am really grateful for the opportunity to explore a workplace in which I might make a career.”

Zoliswa is one of the 1,100 Technogirls from Limpopo and the Eastern Cape who have gained first-hand experience of the inner workings of the corporate world. Twenty girls from Limpopo were selected for university scholarships. The programme now includes 29 participating companies and is poised to grow even more.

Going forward

UNICEF and the Department of Education are looking to expand the Technogirls initiative further. In the next three years, the aim is to:

- Recruit and train 500 teachers to support learners in participating in Technogirls.
- Place another 500 girls in corporate mentorship and skills development programmes.
- Develop a monitoring placement tool to make sure that students are getting the maximum benefit from their internships.
- Use ‘staff mapping’ for companies to identify staff interested in voluntary work around children.
- Organise annual awards for best achievers.
- Develop and pilot ‘enrichment learning’ materials to compliment the school curriculum.
- Develop a careers guide with information on critical skills.

### Participating companies

- ABSA
- African Rainbow Minerals
- Anglo Platinum
- Barloworld
- Budget Rent-a-Car
- BCX – Business Connexion
- Capricorn District Municipality
- De Beers Venetia Mine
- Department of Land Affairs
- Department of Science and Technology
- First National Bank
- Investec
- Larciano Accountants
- Lepelle Northern Water
- WaterMintek
- Mortgage SA
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality
- P E Tourism
- Palabora Foundation
- Polokwane International Airport
- S A Institute of Chartered Accountants
- S A Post Office
- SANLAM
- Seeff Properties
- Standard Bank
- TWIB
- Umsobomvu Youth Fund
- University of Limpopo
- University of Venda
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