



## UNEMPLOYED PARENT

### GRANT HELPS TO PROVIDE FOOD

AN UNEMPLOYED Soweto mother of two is grateful for the child support grant and school feeding scheme helping put food on the table. But she said she would like the social grant to be increased.

Puseletso Mokoena, 24, from Orlando East in Soweto has two boys aged 6 and 8. They attend nearby Leratong Primary School which provides breakfast and lunch. "The feeding scheme is helpful a lot. It saves me the little money I get (social grant) because sometimes they don't have to carry pocket money or lunch boxes," said Mokoena.

"This money is okay to get but I can't afford to buy school uniforms for them. I cannot even buy them warm clothes in winter. So what I try to do is to buy them clothes on a six-month lay by. I wish the money can be increased to R600 per child (per month)."

Life becomes more difficult when schools close and there are no free meals for the two boys. "The money gets finished and it becomes difficult. I make sure flour is always available to bake homemade bread which we eat for breakfast and lunch. At times we go without a meal."

Mokoena said she tried to stretch the social grant as far as possible. "For my two boys I get R820 per month. I spend R200 on (clothing) lay bys, R390 on food, R80 on toiletries, R50 on pocket money and R100 for other things we might need during the month."

Mokoena, who lives with her five siblings, has been looking for a job for years, but she has now given up. "What I do once a week is collect dustbins in my area and clean them up and that is how I make a living."

By ROLAND MPOFU

## CHILDREN'S DIET



CHILDREN need three meals and three snacks daily. By ARMAND HOUGH African News Agency (ANA)

### NUTRITION ESSENTIALS

FOUR micro-nutrients are important for good nutrition and human development: vitamin A, iron, iodine and zinc.

Vitamin A deficiency is the leading cause of preventable blindness in children and increases the risk of severe infections. Iron deficiency causes anaemia and South Africa has a high prevalence of anaemia among preschool-age children. Iodine deficiency is a leading cause of mental retardation and brain damage. Most SA children consume too little.

Iron deficiency contributes to the deaths of young women during pregnancy and childbirth and is a leading cause of anaemia.

Although zinc deficiency is difficult to measure, SA children who are malnourished are at risk of zinc deficiency. By KATHY SNOECK HENKEMANS Dietician

### DAILY NUTRITION

A child needs three meals and three snacks.  
Breakfast: Cereal, milk and a fruit.  
Mid-morning snack: Fruit and yoghurt.  
Lunch: Cheese sandwich, carrot sticks.  
Mid-afternoon snack: Bread with peanut butter.  
Supper: Chicken, rice and vegetables.  
Evening snack: Yoghurt. By LILA BRUK Dietician

## CHILD MARRIAGE THE COST

### LOST LIVES, CHILDHOODS, BILLIONS

CHILD marriage is costing African countries at least \$60 billion (R832bn) in lost lifetime earnings, more than what the world gives the continent in aid each year, the World Bank said on Wednesday.

Be it high school drop-out rates, teen pregnancy or poor health outcomes, the cost of child marriage is far from just monetary, the bank said in its report.

"When it comes to policy making, money talks. What this research shows is that ending child marriage is not only the right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do," said Lakshmi Sundaram, executive director of Girls Not Brides.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest child marriage rates in the world. By Reuters

There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread

MAHATMA GANDHI



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## PROBIOTICS DON'T HELP STOMACH FLU

DESPITE a growing trend of giving kids probiotics to treat "stomach flu", a study shows that these dietary supplements may not actually help ease symptoms of vomiting and diarrhoea.

## SURVEY

# SA 4th on Child-friendly Index

*But improvements needed in implementing policies in malnutrition, stunting and measles vaccination*

EDWIN NAIDU

SOUTH Africa was placed fourth in a survey of the "most child-friendly" country, according to the Child-Friendliness Index by the African Child Policy Forum, but given its resources the country should have been first, according to Yehualashet Mekonen, the lead author of the study.

"South Africa is doing well compared to other African nations, only topped by Mauritius, Algeria and Tunisia, but could have been first," Mekonen told The Sunday Independent.

According to the report, the other most child-friendly governments on the continent are Cabo Verde, Egypt, Namibia, the Seychelles, Swaziland, Morocco and Lesotho.

The "least child-friendly" governments, at the bottom of the 2018 table, are South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Chad, Cameroon, Zambia, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea and Eritrea.

The three pillars on which the index hinges are protection, provision and participation.

South Africa scored high throughout and despite its fourth-place ranking, was described as the "most child-friendly" country.

Mekonen said that according to the index, South Africa had better access to pre-primary education than many African countries.

But improvements were needed in several areas. For example, South Africa has adopted a number of child-related laws and policies, which are not yet in effect.

These include the prohibition of corporal punishment, improving the minimum age of criminal responsibility from the current 10 years to the recommended 12 years, and, implementation of free primary education.

Furthermore, one in every four children under age 5 is chronically malnourished or stunted, while one in every five has not been vaccinated against measles in South Africa.

Mekonen said a pressing concern not just for South Africa but the continent was the surprise finding that 30 years after adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The African Charter on the Rights and



SOUTH Africa ranked fourth among African countries for overall child well-being, according to the Child-friendliness Index. A child-friendly government is defined as one which is making the maximum effort to meet its obligations to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights and ensure their well-being. By NIC BOTHMA Epa

Welfare of the Child, no action taken by governments had changed the narrative of a starving continent. A third of children in Africa are malnourished.

But improvements are expected once legislative reforms are passed for, among others, the Maintenance Act, and several bills before Parliament, including the amendments to the South African Schools Act, draft regulations relating to the Sexual Offences Courts, the draft Child Care and Protection Policy, and draft Children's Amendment Bill.

Yet according to Mekonen, one of the shock findings continent-wide in the index related to children going to school but not learning to

read or count.

"That is one of the major concerns we felt must be urgently addressed and put higher on the agenda," he said.

Civil society lobby group Equal Education said despite making bold statements about the importance of education, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni's 2018 medium-term budget policy statement offered scant respite to the basic education budget.

Allocations to infrastructure grants continued to show a drop over the medium term, and the total basic education budget was growing at a slow rate, when inflation was considered.

Equal Education said that against

a background of social funding cuts, it was disappointing to see that funding that could have been allocated to education and other social sectors was being spent to clean up governance failures at state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

"Instead of adequately addressing the haemorrhaging of resources by SOEs, approximately R8 billion has been allocated towards bailouts for SOEs such as SAA and South African Express.

"This same amount could have been used to fill the gap left by the R7 billion reduction to the education infrastructure grants."

The UN Committee on Economic,

Social and Cultural Rights last month called on the government to speed up efforts to, among others things, improve school infrastructure, reduce school drop-out rates, prevent discrimination related to school fees, improve access to education for learners with disabilities, and hold private players in education to account.

Last Tuesday at a World Children's Day event hosted by the UN Children's Fund in Johannesburg, the release of the South African Child Gauge® by the Children's Institute at UCT, which monitors progress towards realising children's rights, sketched a bleak scenario for children in the country, saying much more had to be done.

## NUTRITION

# Millions of SA children hungry, unable to thrive

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CHILDREN continue to bear the brunt of poverty in the country, with millions of them exposed to hunger daily. A recent report by the University of Cape Town's Children's Institute paints a grim picture of more than 6 million children going hungry, stunting their potential to thrive.

Reacting to the 2018 SA Child Gauge, dieticians said malnutrition

has a significant effect on children's development and growth, and food insecurity and malnutrition are linked to disease exposure.

A dietician in private practice, Kathy Snoeck Henkemans, pointed out that even if a child consumes enough kilojoules to survive, this does not necessarily mean that they will get enough of the essential micronutrients their bodies require, which in turn exposes them to diseases.

"Inadequate food consumption

increases a child's risk of infectious diseases such as malaria, measles, persistent diarrhoea and pneumonia, which can keep the body from absorbing adequate food... Hunger reduces a child's motor skills, activity level and motivation to explore the environment," said Henkemans.

Another dietician, Lila Bruk, said: "A deficiency of energy and protein can lead to a condition called marasmus, which is characterised by an extreme wasted and emaci-

ated appearance. Also a deficiency of protein alone can lead to kwashiorkor which is characterised by low albumin levels in the blood.

"Vitamin and mineral deficiencies can also have extreme effects on various aspects of the child's health, including poor growth, poor brain development (and in extreme cases mental retardation), poor bone health, weakened immune system, vision impairment, rickets, muscle weakness, blood clotting disorders, dry skin, loss

of appetite and digestive disorders. It is therefore essential that a child's nutrition is optimised – especially in the first few years of life."

Meanwhile, Department of Basic Education spokesperson Elijah Mhlanga said they feed 9.8 million pupils a day at schools. "The meals are an important intervention by the government, as most of the children would not have a meal were it not for the School Nutrition Programme," said Mhlanga.

## ESIDIMENI

# Mother took 'missing' mental patient

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QUESTIONS still surround the marathon Life Esidimeni relocation project months after reparations were granted to the affected families. In tallying up the numbers relocated, some patients seem to have fallen through the cracks.

Acting mental health director in Gauteng Dr Kobie Marais said one patient who was moved to a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Orange Farm, south of Joburg, was unaccounted for in the total tally of 1730.

The patient's mother said she might not be on the list because she removed her from the NGO unlawfully. Thandi Letswana from Vosloorus, east

of Joburg, said her daughter, Princess Mlotshwa, was moved from Esidimeni in Randfontein to an ill-equipped NGO in Orange Farm. Letswana said she was shocked when Esidimeni informed her.

"I was not attending the (relocation) meetings at Esidimeni as I did not have the money for transport. Sometime in 2016 I got a call from a lady telling me my daughter had been moved to an NGO in Orange Farm."

"When I arrived there I found an RDP house being renovated and the name of the NGO was not on the gate. The patients were sitting outside without warm clothes on."

"When I asked the owner, Thulani, why they were outside without warm clothes, he could not answer

me. He just said all their clothes, identity documents and Sassa cards were missing," said Letswana.

The bad state her daughter was in drove her to tears. "I did not sleep all night as I was crying. So I decided to go back and take my daughter."

"When I arrived I told them I would like her to visit us. That was the last time they saw her."

Marais said Princess was not one of the 21 missing patients or of the 1730 relocated patients.

"I could not find her on the list, but I will check all reports around her discharge. I can confirm she was discharged from Randfontein."

Marais previously said 62 of the 100 patients who went missing were found with their families.



arts & culture  
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### Invitation to Tender

The appointment of a service provider to review and develop five year / end of term report for the Department of Arts and Culture.

Tender no: DAC 16/18-19

Required at: Department of Arts and Culture Due at: 14 December 2018 at 11:00am

The Tender documents will be available on <https://artsculturesa.wordpress.com/> and on social media platforms Facebook and Twitter: /ArtsCultureSA or obtainable from the Department's website: [www.dac.gov.za](http://www.dac.gov.za) or can be collected at 202 Sechaba House, Cnr Paul Kruger and Madiba Street, Pretoria.

Compulsory briefing session: 29 November 2018 at 10:00am.

Venue: 202 Sechaba House, Cnr Madiba and Paul Kruger Street, Pretoria.

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