

# Improving nutrition and early childhood development

JOHANNESBURG, PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA, November 23, 2021

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Hunger remains a primary social issue in South Africa, with 11% of the population without adequate access to food. For many households, families do not know how and when their next meal will land on the table, and for millions of children, school meals are often the only source of nutrition. Since the start of COVID-19 lockdown, [Breadline Africa](#) has provided ingredients to community-based kitchens and ECDs which has supported more than 3 million meals for vulnerable adults and young children across South Africa.



Feeding children

Breadline Africa has been working with under-resourced communities in South Africa for the past 28 years, converting shipping containers into functional classrooms, libraries and kitchens.

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As an organisation, we have made our commitment to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially working together towards 'Zero Hunger,' SDG 2”

*Marion Wagner*

While a key focus is improving the infrastructure at early childhood development (ECD) centres, pre-, and primary schools, Breadline Africa has supported 44 successful feeding projects across 85 communities to help alleviate the hunger experienced by many families since the pandemic began.

"COVID-19 and lockdown has exacerbated hunger and food insecurity in under-resourced communities. Many adults have lost their work or seen a decrease in their income, making it more challenging to provide for their

families," says Marion Wagner, director of Breadline Africa. "Consequently, childhood hunger has increased by 50% since early 2020."

"Many families are increasingly reliant on government grants and community-based feeding

programmes to get their food," says Wagner.

"It is important for us to ensure that while we focus on improving educational infrastructure, we cannot ignore hunger," says Wagner. "Children are not able to fully focus on their work and learning on an empty stomach. This is where our nutritional feeding partners, along with community feeding programmes, play such an important role."

While the inability to focus on schoolwork may be a short-term issue, hunger and malnutrition can have long-term impacts on a child's development. Even a slight nutritional deficiency can impair motor and cognitive development, affecting how a child may acquire social and physical skills over time. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), inadequate nutrition is the most direct cause of stunted growth in children.

Before COVID-19, one in four children under the age of five were stunted for their age due to inadequate nutrition and not getting enough food and nutrients for healthy growth and development. However, following the pandemic's start, one in six households reported that their children went hungry due to a lack of food. This increases the risk of stunted growth and impaired development. "For all of our beneficiaries, a well-equipped kitchen and food supplies ensure that children can get at least one nutritious meal while at school," says Wagner.

"As an organisation, we have made our commitment to the sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially working together towards 'Zero Hunger,' SDG 2," says Wagner.

To continue providing for 12,000 meals a week and placing another 117 feeding kitchens over the next few years, we need the support of individual and corporate donors. Benefits include tax certificates, enterprise development points, immediate social and environmental impact and branding opportunities, even for partial donations. ."

To find out more about Breadline Africa and their feeding programmes, visit <https://breadlineafrica.org/>

ENDS

To support Breadline Africa, donations can be made to the following account:

Investec Bank Limited

Account no: 10012399069

Branch code: 580105

Swift code: IVESZAJJXXX

To find out more about Breadline Africa and their work visit [www.breadline.org](http://www.breadline.org), or follow them on Facebook at @BreadlineAfrica

About Breadline Africa

Breadline Africa, one of the biggest suppliers of converted shipping containers for poverty relief

in Southern Africa, has provided more than 700 containers to poverty-stricken communities since its establishment in 1993. The South African-based non-profit organisation believes that every child has the capacity to do something amazing with his or her life. When a child's imagination is unlocked, possibilities are opened up, allowing them to choose a path for their own future. Breadline Africa enables this journey by providing initiatives and infrastructure to support childhood development in Southern Africa. The renovated containers and prefabricated units are used as early childhood development centres (pre-schools), feeding kitchens, toilet blocks, and primary school libraries.

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