



INMED
Partnerships for Children
Healthy Children, Bright Futures

Health in Action

Success Stories



**How INMED's Health in Action Programme is Inspiring
Healthy Lifestyles Among Children, Families and Communities
in South Africa**



HEALTH IN ACTION

To address South Africa's public health crisis of rising obesity rates even as hunger and malnutrition persist, INMED Partnerships for Children and INMED South Africa are proud to offer the Health in Action programme. With support from the Mondelēz International Foundation and in partnership with local public and private entities, this programme takes a multifaceted approach to inspire and involve individuals of all ages in adopting healthy nutrition and lifestyles.

Health in Action annually reaches more than 100,000 primary school children ages 6 through 12 years old in 116 schools in 13 at-risk communities in the provinces of Gauteng and Eastern Cape in close partnership with the Departments of Education. All of the project sites are in low income areas, in quintile 1-3 no-fees schools. The programme will ultimately engage approximately 137,500 children as well as their teachers, school food workers and food vendors, parents and other community members.

The objectives of Health in Action are to:

1 Promote sustainable improvements in children's health and nutritional status through participatory education, physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

2 Improve nutrition and reduce hunger by increasing access to fresh produce via school, home and community gardens, and through the installation of a large aquaponic system in each project

province to serve as a learning tool and source of abundant fresh produce and nutritious fish protein to supplement meals in targeted schools.

3 Increase participation in physical activity, both through school-based physical education and leisure time recreation and play, with an emphasis on making activity fun so that it becomes a welcome habit. "Break Time Buddies" selected by school governing boards from among local unemployed youth encourage children to take an active part in recess time by guiding activities and monitoring safety.

4 Promote positive changes in the school feeding schemes, including advocacy for compliance with government feeding program mandates, training school food workers in food hygiene and preparation of nutritious meals that incorporate garden produce, providing basic food preparation supplies where needed and working with snack vendors to offer healthier options.

5 Build the foundation for long-term sustainability by involving parents and community members as well as local and state governments, academic institutions, other non-governmental organizations and private-sector entities as partners in the development, implementation and ongoing support of the program and the healthy lifestyles messages it promotes.

Following are a sampling of success stories from our Health in Action efforts.

Spreading the Gift of Nutrition and Health

INMED is promoting health and nutrition in the community by appearing on popular television and radio programmes. Designed to inspire healthy eating and physical activity for people of all ages, the segments feature cooking demonstrations, healthy lunch box ideas and simple exercises to practice at home, work or school.

Through a collaboration with City of Johannesburg's public health unit, INMED has been featured in multiple segments of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's DTV program, a television program produced for hearing-impaired viewers. The segments focus on key topics promoted through the Health in Action program, including episodes on preparing healthy and balanced meals, nutritious lunch box and snack ideas, promoting physical activity with simple exercises and painted games and aquaponics.



In one episode, for example, Health in Action Project Coordinator Dr Sandra Pretorius shared tips on how to prepare delicious, balanced meals, followed by a brief cooking demonstration at the Elias Motsoaledi Clinic in Orlando. That DTV segment inspired a group of "magogos" (grandmothers) to start senior fitness classes at one of INMED's Health in Action schools—a key example of how the programme encourages greater community engagement in nutrition, fitness and healthy lifestyles. A licensed dietician, Dr Pretorius has been leading healthy eating educational sessions and cooking demos for a number of years in low-resource communities in collaboration with the City of Johannesburg and Department of Health.

Health in Action was also featured in a two-part segment of "Planting the Seeds" on SA FM radio. Hosted by Asanda Matsaunyane, the programme discusses issues that are of interest in the fields of agricultural production, policies and practices, as well other sectors linked to the agriculture, fisheries, forestries, and land spaces. INMED South Africa Operations Manager Janet Ogilvie described how our innovative aquaponics projects are improving access to fresh foods for disadvantaged communities.

Stay tuned for more about INMED's Health in Action programme, coming to a TV or radio station near you!





Growing Young Entrepreneurs in Port Elizabeth

Each year, 7th grade students across the country are required to start an entrepreneurship initiative as part of their school curriculum. In 2016, INMED South Africa encouraged Seyisi Primary School in Port Elizabeth to use its Health in Action garden as its entrepreneurship project.

The school garden has been a key source of more nutritious school meals as well as an income generator within the community. The students maintain the garden as part of their academic curricula, learning lessons on life science, math, nutrition, sanitation and environmental stewardship.

The 7th grade students decided to run the garden as a business, learning how to develop a business plan, set goals, purchase supplies and inventory, maintain their resources, market their products and generate a profit. At the end of the project, the entire school hosted a Market Day, an event open to the community to purchase their produce, herbs, prepared foods and other items made from the garden's bounty. The event was also organized to encourage community members to plant their own household gardens for food and income.

INMED provided compost, seedlings, potting bags and soil for the school garden, in addition to building a seedling nursery at the school to boost the initiative and to support other nearby schools with

seedlings for their Health in Action gardens.

The 7th graders set a target to earn R5,000 from this project—with half to be re-invested in the garden and the other half to fund a farewell function for the graduating students. The project was so successful that the students exceeded their target by R3,000.

"This initiative is one of many ways INMED South Africa is spurring economic development via our Adaptive Agriculture and Health in Action Programmes," notes Dr Linda Pfeiffer, President and CEO of INMED Partnerships for Children.

"It's encouraging to see how eagerly the children take to aquaponics and school gardens—and how their enthusiasm ripples out into the families and communities."

"It warms our hearts to see how eagerly the children take to aquaponics and school gardens—and how their enthusiasm ripples out into the families and communities to make a sustainable impact on many lives."

Opportunities for Youth in School and Out

A recent survey indicates that 4 out of 10 children in Johannesburg are obese. One way INMED South Africa is fighting this obesity epidemic is through a new Health in Action initiative called “Break Time Buddies.”

Break Time Buddies are unemployed youth who have graduated secondary school and are recruited by INMED via local school governing boards. In partnership with tertiary institutions, such as Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth and Wits University in Johannesburg, they are trained to lead fun physical education activities while promoting nutrition and healthy lifestyles during daily recess at 116 schools.

“This programme has enabled me to make a difference in my community. Every time I visit schools I am welcomed by screams of kids competing for my attention,” says Samkelo Dumse, a Break Time Buddy in Kwa-Zakhele schools.



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In collaboration with the University of Witwatersrand’s Center for Exercise and Sports Medicine, Break Time Buddies receive classroom and hands-on training on the importance of physical education and strategies for encouraging children to be active. The training is followed by practical, participatory activities on how to prepare and deliver physical education lessons in primary schools.

Our Break Time Buddies have played a key role in organizing and demonstrating physical education lessons for teachers and students during class time in selected schools. Prior to these sessions, our local Health in Action programme monitors work closely with each Buddy on how to plan an educational session, followed by an evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses to build their capabilities, professionalism and confidence. As a result, Break Time Buddies are highly regarded in the schools and have sparked the interest of other communities.





Empowering Children to Race for Their Dreams

Khunedi Mashishi is the epitome of what INMED strives to accomplish with its Health in Action programme (HIA). An 11-year-old fifth grade student at Paradise Bend Primary School in Diepsloot, Gauteng, Khunedi is an avid cross-country runner. She has won 32 medals since she started competitive running in 2013. In fact, Khunedi runs so fast that her school mates have nicknamed her Caster after 2016 Olympic gold medal runner Caster Semenya.

So it was great news when Khunedi was invited to compete in South Africa’s junior national cross country championship. It seemed unlikely that she would be able to participate, however. Her widowed father, who works for a towing company, did not have the means to cover the travel expenses and other costs for the competition.

“When INMED South Africa heard about Khunedi, we stepped up to sponsor her for the event, providing her track suit, uniform, travel and accommodations,” notes INMED SA Operations Manager Janet Ogilvie. “As Paradise Bend is one of INMED’s Health in Action Schools, we felt the sponsorship reflected our ethos of nutrition, exercise and healthy lifestyles as a foundation for success. INMED’s sponsorship not only benefits Khunedi but also the other students at Paradise Bend,” she adds.

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Pictured here with fellow competitors, Khunedi proudly displays the gold she won at the national race and has dreams of competing in the Summer Olympics one day.



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