

Support for 11 new ECD centres in KZN as Shoprite expands fight against hunger

Shoprite is expanding its efforts to combat child hunger by extending support to 11 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in KwaZulu-Natal, directly benefitting over 700 children across Canelands, Cornubia, and Waterloo.

The retailer supports 124 ECD centres across South Africa, serving over 8 490 children with nutritious meals daily. For many, the meal provided through Shoprite's partnership with [the Lunchbox Fund](#), is the only one they receive each day.

"Shoprite's meal support has had a positive impact on the children's learning experience as many come to school with empty stomachs. Now the children are better nourished and more comfortable in class," says Ayanda Malyaga, Principal at Little Learners ECD Centre in Verulam.

Child hunger remains a devastating reality for millions of families and according to the [South African Food Security Index 2024](#), a staggering 21.2% of children in South Africa will be stunted by 2025.

"Children should not be worried about food, they must always feel free to enjoy their childhood. That is why we make sure that every day, when they come to school, we provide everything that they need. When children come to school tired and hungry, they struggle to concentrate. Now when the children arrive at school in the morning, we can provide them with breakfast, and then lunch and I can see a huge difference. They are more active, and they concentrate better in class. It has had such a big impact," says Cebisile Mthembu, Principal at Sinothando Day Care Centre in Waterloo.

In the past financial year alone, Shoprite invested more than R7.2 million in ECD centres, ensuring that young children have access to the vital nutrition needed for their growth.

Additionally, ECD practitioners at these centres receive comprehensive training aimed at improving the quality of education and care provided.

"At the heart of our [Act For Change programme's ECD support](#) is the knowledge that adequate nutrition during the first 1 000 days of a child's life is critical for their mental and physical development. We want to ensure children are provided the best possible foundation for their future," says Sanjeev Raghubir, Chief Sustainability Officer at the Shoprite Group.

END

Note to the editor:

The full list of schools in Verulam and Waterloo with new ECD support are:

- Sizamakonke Creche in Canelands, Verulam.
- Isiqalo Esihle Creche & Preschool in Canelands, Verulam.
- Happy Angel ECD in Canelands, Verulam.
- Little Learners ECD Centre in Cornubia, Verulam.
- Learning Together Creche in Waterloo.
- Othandweni Creche in Waterloo.
- Sinothando Day Care Centre in Waterloo.
- Waterloo ECD Centre in Waterloo.

- Bhekimpilo Day Care Centre in Waterloo.
- Christ Miracle Creche & Preschool in Waterloo.
- Langelihle Creche in Waterloo.