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# **PROGRAMMES SUPPORTING THE TURNAROUND STRATEGY TO ADDRESS LEARNER PREGNANCY**



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## **CONTEXTUALISING PREGNANCY STATISTICS**

The stats from STATS SA, the Dept. of health and DOE may vary due to the following reasons:

- STATS SA and/or the General Household Survey collects data even for pregnant teens that have never attended health facilities for antenatal care and to deliver their babies. They also gather data for pregnant teens who have attended private facilities.
- Department of Health covers teenagers who are out of school, but who have been attended at Primary Health Care facilities.
- DOE report only stats where learners have disclosed the pregnancy. There is a possibility that many cases are not reported.
- In some instances a learner pregnancy is reported at least three times because stats are collected quarterly, and may therefore be duplicated.

# Learner pregnancy stats per district: 2013-2015

Pregnancy Stats for 2012 to 2015 in KZN			
DISTRICT	2013	2014	2015
AMAJUBA	527	673	691
ILEMBE	809	867	938
PINETOWN	626	719	880
SISONKE	657	623	516
UGU	398	750	1200
UMGUNGUNDLOVU	1199	628	275
UMKHANYAKUDE	1658	1380	1689
UMLAZI	1658	1110	1018
UMZINYATHI	888	603	685
UTHUKELA	456	725	702
UTHUNGULU	1204	1245	865
ZULULAND	1120	890	742
TOTAL	11200	10213	10201



The General Household Survey (2013) indicates a trend of increasing incidence of pregnancy year on year (2011=68 000; 2012=81 000; 2013=99 000), indicating that the prevalence noted in KZN is part of a national trend

The issue of learner pregnancy is impacted by a host of contributing factors which are not restricted to the school context



## FACTORS

Including, but not limited to:

- Emergent culture of consumerism & materialism (blessers)
- Misrepresentation of traditional and religious practices and beliefs (amalawu, ukugaxa, ukuthwala, ukuboniswa)
- Substance Abuse
- Infrastructure: absence of spaces and services for youth, recreational and educational facilities (resulting in imiqasho) within communities and informal settlements
- Care and support post allocation in education not commensurate with the demand for learner support interventions
- Further, complicated by high number of vacancies due to policy determinations



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KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has risen to the challenges of HIV and AIDS, learner pregnancy and substance abuse by putting in place this campaign, entitled ***“My Life, My Future!”*** (MLMF). The campaign is founded on the conviction that if young people are inspired to believe in their dreams (*my life*) and have aspirations for the future (*my future*), they will be inspired to take personal responsibility for their education and sexuality, and may become active participants in the fight against the HIV & AIDS pandemic and the increasing numbers of teenagers falling pregnant and abusing substances



The programmes supporting the turnaround strategy, under the My Life My Future Campaign, have three main objectives viz.:

- Increasing school retention for learners experiencing social, health and behaviour related barriers ,
- Reducing social ills like learner pregnancy and substance abuse, while increasing knowledge of the dangers of HIV and related conditions
- Promoting achievement behaviour among learners.



## My Life My Future Target Schools

- For the Financial Year 2016/2017, the Department has a budget of R 53 096 000 which is being used to implement My Life My Future Programmes in 1 159 targeted schools
- The criteria for selection of these schools is as follows:
  - Schools are taken from all 12 districts
  - Schools with high number of orphans and vulnerable children & children from child-headed households
  - Schools from previously disadvantaged communities: Deep Rural & Informal Settlements
  - Underperforming secondary schools-Gr 12 2015
  - High rates of learner pregnancy & HIV prevalence
  - TB/alcohol and drug use hotspots
  - Locations: Peri-mining and coastal areas with a high burden of HIV and TB infections



## Distribution of My Life My Future Schools per district:

DISTRICT	Number of schools
Amajuba	71
Ilembe	99
Pinetown	78
Harry Gwala	98
Ugu	93
Umgungundlovu	78
Umkhanyakude	132
Umlazi	78
Umzinyathi	100
Uthukela	83
Uthungulu	117
Zululand	132
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 159</b>



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## **Legislative Framework informing the programmes**

1. Department of Basic Education National Policy on HIV, STIs and TB, 2015
2. Multi-Sectoral Provincial Strategic Plan for HIV & AIDS, STIs and TB 2012-16 for KwaZulu Natal
3. Education White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education
4. DBE's Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Framework
5. Integrated School Health Policy, 2012
6. DBE's Draft Policy for the prevention and management of learner pregnancy
7. Guidelines for the Prevention & Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Public Schools
8. Policy Guidelines for the Management of Child Abuse & Neglect in the KZNDoE
9. National guidelines for the management and prevention of drug use and abuse



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## **Programmes addressing learner pregnancy**

Targeted programmes for schools with the highest rates of learner pregnancy are:

1. Learner Support Agents
2. Integrated school health Programme
3. Soul buddyz Programme
4. Peer Education Programme
5. Inter-school competitions
6. Community dialogues
7. Keeping Girls in School
8. Baby not now
9. Supply of MLMF LTSM and ISHP Resources



## **1. Appointment of Learner Support Agents**

- 519 out of school youth are being appointed as Learner Support Agents(LSA's) to work in schools across the 12 districts in the province
- This is part of the poverty alleviation Programme which creates job opportunities for the out of school youth as envisaged in the National Development Plan
- LSA's are employed on a one-year contractual basis renewable annually with a stipend of R 3 500 per month
- LSA's are employed to run on-site peer education & care and support programmes in schools on a day to day basis in order to directly address the scourge of social ills in schools.
- They work with the School Based Support Teams under the supervision of the school principal to promote learner retention, prevent learner pregnancy as well as drug and alcohol use, and promote health and wellbeing of the learners in the school.

# Distribution of LSA's per district

DISTRICT	2014/15	Increase	2015/16	Increase	2016/17
Amajuba	05	10	15	11	26
Ilembe	08	24	32	12	44
Pinetown	08	24	32	6	38
Harry Gwala	08	24	32	11	43
Ugu	08	24	32	11	43
Umgungundlovu	08	24	32	6	38
Umkhanyakude	09	28	37	15	52
Umlazi	08	24	32	6	38
Umzinyathi	08	24	32	13	45
Uthukela	08	24	32	6	38
Uthungulu	11	30	41	11	52
Zululand	11	40	51	11	62
TOTAL	100	300	400	10	519



## Key Roles and responsibilities of LSAs

- Link needy learners to social welfare services (DSD, SASA, DoHA & NGO's like Red Cross & Doctors without Borders) for them to get necessary support.
- Follow up on learners not attending school regularly due to, amongst other things, pregnancy and accompany them to local health facilities to be properly attended and return to school
- In respect of pregnant learners who come from child-headed families, the LSAs link them with Local **Operation Sukuma Sakhe** Structures in soliciting advice and continued support for the learners.



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## **Key Roles and responsibilities of LSAs Cont.**

- Assist the schools in encouraging and supporting learners to return to school after their period of confinement.
- Offer guidelines on organising learning material and effective learning strategies to pregnant learners confined to their homes.
- Conduct peer group sessions in the school to instil good decision making, healthy lifestyles, sense of purpose and future as well as positive self esteem amongst the learners to encourage high academic achievement and discourage involvement in social ills like pregnancy, drug and alcohol use.



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## Key Roles and responsibilities of LSAs Cont.

- Assist the school to conduct inter-school competitions and campaigns covering the following themes:
  - child protection
  - prevention of teenage pregnancy with a specific focus on blessers/sugar daddies
  - prevention of alcohol & drug use
  - prevention of sexual abuse
  - Prevention of HIV and TB infections

**competitions involve storytelling, drama, posters, songs, poems, drawing or any other form of art around the above mentioned themes**





## Key Roles and responsibilities of LSAs Cont.

- Assist in facilitating learners' to access facilities for electronic applications and career development activities
- Assist the school in providing parents and learners with information regarding school subject packages/subject selection.
- Assist the teacher who is on homework club duty to support learners in complete their homework.
- Assist the school health team on health days/events with amongst other things:
  - distribution of advocacy materials
  - administrative/ organisational tasks (setting up room for health screening with relevant equipment for screening; collating of consent/assent forms; compiling of lists of learners to be attended to.



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## Key Roles and responsibilities of LSAs Cont.

- Assist the teacher who is on homework club duty to support learners in complete their homework.
- Under the supervision of the peer supervisor, the LSA will assist peers in engaging in fund-raising activities to address the needs of orphans and other vulnerable children e.g. school uniform and food parcels.



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## Skills development Programme for LSA's

- In order to capacitate the LSA's to do their work effectively and as part of providing skills for the youth for future employment, they will be trained for the accredited basic counseling course in 2016/17 financial year.
- This qualification will not only empower them to identify and support learners in need, but also it will open doors for them to be employed in the field of Care and Support by other government Department or Non-Governmental organisations



## 2. Integrated School Health Programme

The Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP), a joint programme by the Departments of Education, Health and Social Development is currently being implemented in 3 731 mostly disadvantaged schools.

One of its key components is health education which focuses on imparting knowledge, skills, values and positive attitudes to the learners in terms of sexual and reproductive health with a strong focus on prevention of learner pregnancy. Learners are given information on :

- Puberty; Menstruation; Pregnancy; Sexuality, Gender Based Violence, Sexual Assault; Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- HIV Counselling & Testing (HCT); Medical Male Circumcision (MMC) and referral; Contraception - promoting dual contraception



### 3. Soul Buddyz Clubs Programme

In 1320 primary schools across all 12 districts, the department has been working closely with Soul City in the implementation of Soul Buddyz Club programme which focuses on the following:

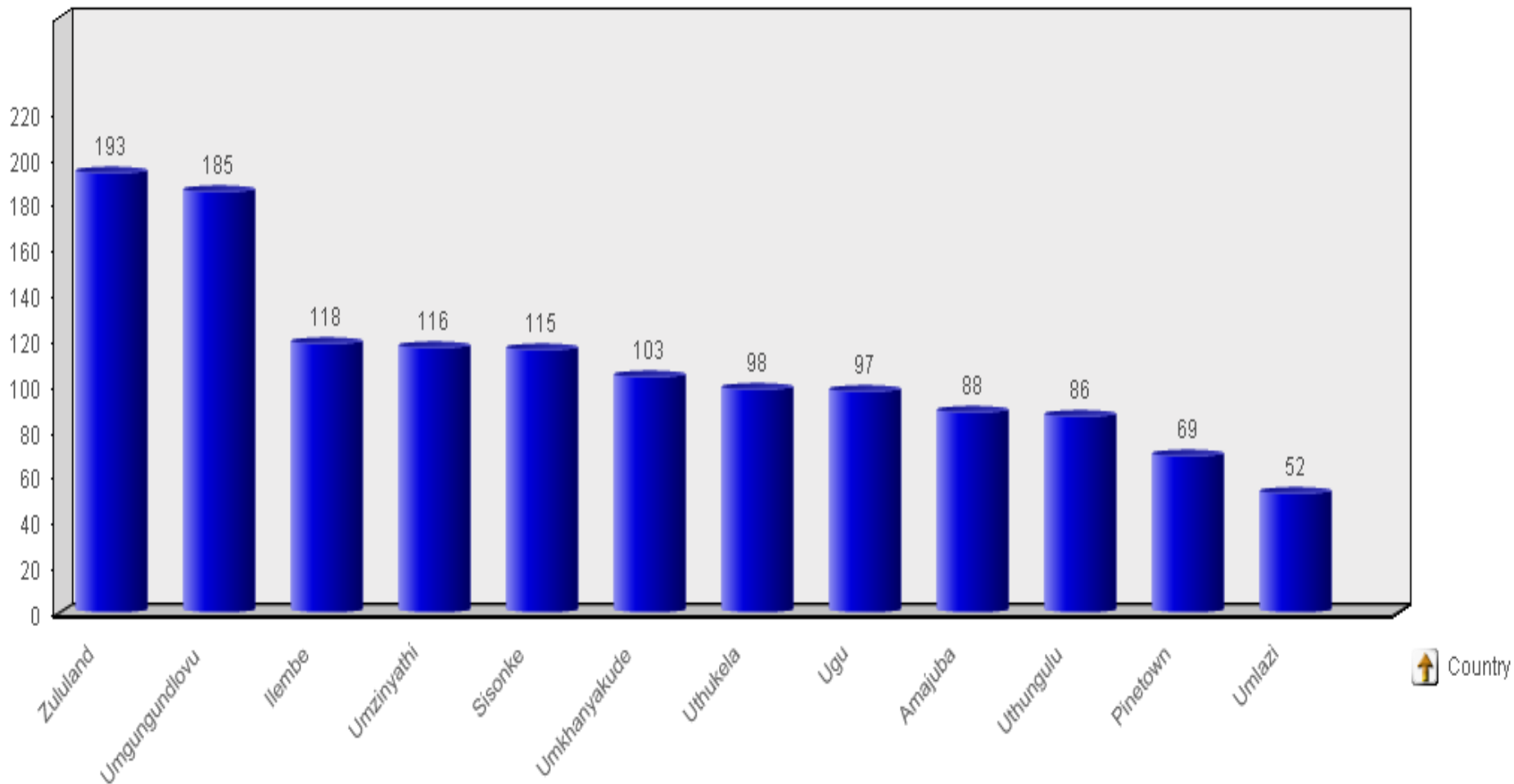
- providing learners with edutainment that allows them to have fun whilst learning and also equipping club members with the knowledge and skills to protect their physical and emotional health with major focus on prevention of learner pregnancy.
- the clubs also conduct care and support projects for needy learners, orphans and other vulnerable children, specifically those from child headed households
- clubs have about 40 000 members touching the lives of more than half a million learners in the province. KwaZulu Natal Department of Education has won top prizes for the past three years as a province rendering the most effective care and support for vulnerable learners in National Soul Buddyz competitions conducted by Soul City.



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## Soul Buddyz Clubs





## 4. Peer Education Clubs Programme

- Peer education programme attempts to significantly reduce learner pregnancy by training learners as **peer educators** to positively influence behaviour of other learners in their schools by modelling healthy behaviour and demonstrating healthy academic decision making and social skills through their peer education school clubs .
- The use of peer education clubs as a strategy is based on the fact that adolescents are mostly influenced by their peers and are more likely to listen to and openly discuss sensitive issues such as sexuality matters with their peers than with adults.
- The Department is strengthening Peer Education Programme in 519 secondary schools across all 12 districts in the province where there are high rates of learner pregnancy. The table in the following slide shows the distribution of peer education clubs per district in the province

# Peer education Clubs per district

DISTRICT	2015	2016
Amajuba	15	26
Ilembe	32	44
Pinetown	32	38
Harry Gwala	32	43
Ugu	32	43
Umgungundlovu	32	38
Umkhanyakude	37	52
Umlazi	32	38
Umzinyathi	32	45
Uthukela	32	38
Uthungulu	41	52
Zululand	51	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>519</b>



# Roles of Peer Educators

## 1. Educator

- Informal face-to-face, one-on-one discussion/education sessions about healthy living
- Encourage positive life choices-reduce risky behaviour
- Enhance health seeking behaviour

## 2. Role models (Integrity)

- Positive role models for healthy behaviour
- Reinforce values/Attitudes in the form of positive peer pressure
- Need to be noticeable, genuine and credible

# Roles of Peer Educators

## 3. Supporter

- Building trusting relationship with peers
- Listen to their experiences and provide support to build self-esteem and address their problems
- Set boundaries on what issues they can address and when they need to refer to professionals
- For the health practitioners to be able to provide these services, parental consent is required and hence, peer educators are urged to mobilise parents to sign and return to school consent forms for Integrated School Health Programme.

# Roles of Peer Educators

## 4. Referral Agent

- Identify learners with problems (Psycho-social, behavioural and academic) and refer them to appropriate support- Youth friendly health, psycho-social/social services

## 5. Advocate

- Make School management know of learners 'needs and advocate for resources



## 5. Inter-school Competitions

As part of sending strong messages discouraging learner pregnancy, substance abuse, learner sexual abuse and new HIV infections, the Department organises inter-school competitions.

- The competitions instill positive behavior change amongst the learners. This is evident in the inspirational stories, poems and projects created and presented by learners themselves during competitions.
- All secondary schools across 12 districts in the province are encouraged to participate in the competitions, however special attention is given to 519 schools with the highest rate of learner pregnancy.



## 6. Community Dialogues in collaboration with Operation Sukuma Sakhe Structures

Given learner pregnancy is mostly driven by factors beyond the school, the Department works through Operation Sukuma Sakhe structures to get school community members including parents, educators, learners and other stakeholders to deliberate on these factors and come up with collaborative strategies to effectively address this scourge. At least 1 community dialogue per district is held each year.



## 6. Community Dialogues in collaboration with Operation Sukuma Sakhe Structures Cont.

From the community dialogues the following factors have emerged as the determinants of learner pregnancy and our programmes and plans are now to a certain extent tailor-made to address them:

- Emergent culture of consumerism & materialism (blessers)
- Misrepresentation of traditional and religious practices and beliefs (amalawu, ukugaxa, ukuthwala, ukuboniswa)
- Substance Abuse within school communities
- Infrastructure: absence of spaces and services for youth, recreational and educational facilities (resulting in imiqasho) within communities and informal settlements



## 7. Keeping Girls in Schools programme(KGIS)- Focusing on Young Girls

- KGIS is a Department of Basic Education programme implemented in partnership with Media in Education Trust (MIET).
- It focuses on female learners in Grades 7–9 in 168 schools with high rates of learner pregnancy in three rural districts, namely **Harry Gwala, Umkhanyakude and Zululand.**
- The focus is on strengthening the capacity of schools to support female learners academically, emotionally and socially so that they remain in school until the completion of Grade 12.
- It inculcates knowledge, skills and values for girl learners to focus on their career development and avoid behaviour that could lead to pregnancy, school drop-out and HIV infection.
- The programme incorporates the following key areas: **Career Development Support Programmes including subject selection; Health Education; Homework Assistance and Peer Support.** To date 24507 girls have been reached by the programme.



## **8. Baby, Not Now! : A Learner Pregnancy Prevention Programme**

The KZNDOE in 2015 embarked on piloting in schools in 3 districts viz. Sisonke, Uthukela and Umgungundlovu, a prevention programme to address learner pregnancy and early parenthood. The programme targets both boys and girls and aims to educate learners about the likely outcomes of engaging in sexual activity. It also aims to assist the learners to make life choices that protect their health, support their access to educational opportunities and promote their future prospects. One of the outcomes of the pilot was the development of a facilitator's manual and a learner workbook. These manuals have been developed as a resource additional to the Curriculum lifeskills programme. This programme will be upscaled to all 12 districts in the 2016/17 financial year.





## 9. Supply of My Life My Future and ISHP Resources

In supporting curriculum delivery for HIV & learner pregnancy prevention, Psycho-Social Support and Career Guidance, the department is supplying the following resources to schools to be used by educators and learners:

**To all 5 797 public schools and 72 special schools in the province across all 12 districts:**

- My Life My Future Staying Healthy resource books
- Guidelines for the Prevention & Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Public Schools
- Speak Out-Youth Report Sexual Abuse
- KZNDOE Guidelines for the Management of Child Abuse & Neglect
- KZNDOE Guidelines for school based support teams on management of psycho-social issues
- National guidelines for the management and prevention of drug use and abuse



## 9. Supply of My Life My Future and ISHP Resources Cont

- Booklet on the scope of Psycho-social Support Services
- Guideline document for School Based Support teams/ SMTs on Managing Psycho-social Barriers to Learning
- The KZNDOE Revised Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Protocol
- A guide for school governing bodies and management teams on how to develop an HIV & AIDS Plan for their schools
- My Life My Future Staying Healthy: grade 10 Life Orientation Teacher Books to all 1503 secondary and 562 combined public schools
- My Life My Future Staying Healthy: grade 10 Life Orientation Learner Activity Books to all 1503 secondary and 562 combined public schools
- Career Guidance And Counselling Charts to all 1503 secondary and 562 combined public schools



## **9. Supply of My Life My Future and ISHP Resources Cont ISHP resources delivered to all 3 731 Quintile one public schools in the province across all 12 districts:**

- Medical scales to be used by school health nurses in checking body mass index, weight, obesity and malnutrition for learners as part of health screening and on-site services provision. Learners who are diagnosed as not healthy are either given services on site or referred to nearest health facilities. Health education is also provided with regard to health and wellness including physical exercise, healthy eating and sexual & reproductive health (with focus also on prevention of unwanted pregnancies)
- First Aid Kits for all 5 797 schools to be used by educators for universal precautions against HIV infections especially during school sports and any emergencies where there is blood spillage.
- Screen Curtains to 800 needy quintile 1 schools selected in all 12 districts to provide private space for nurses to do health screening without disturbing classes.



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## **9. Supply of My Life My Future and ISHP Resources Cont ISHP resources delivered to all 3 731 Quintile one public schools in the province across all 12 districts:**

- Integrated School Health Information Leaflets
- Integrated School Health Consent And Assent Forms
- Guidelines For School Governing Bodies To Consult The Integrated School Health Programme
- Integrated School Health Programme Banner
- Integrated School Health Programme Poster
- Integrated School Health Programme Policy, 2012

## 10. Non Governmental Organisations that we partner with

NGO	Programme Description	Area :Districts	Target Group
MIET	Keeping Girls in schools	Harry Gwala; Zululand and Umkhanyakude	Young Girls in Grades 7-9 in 168 secondary and primary schools
National Education Collaborative trust (NECT)	Provides funding for the appointment of Additional Learner Support Agents in schools	Pinetown and Uthungulu	108 schools 54 Primary + 54 secondary schools
Soul City	Soul Buddyz Clubs: Care and Support projects for needy learners especially those from <b><u>child headed households</u></b>	All 12 districts	1320 primary schools
Red Cross	Peer Education Programme	Amajuba; Umgungundlovu	

## 10. Non Governmental Organisations that we partner with Cont

NGO	Programme Description	Area :Districts	Target Group
Red Cross	Peer Education Programme: HIV Prevention & Care and Support	Amajuba; Umgungundlovu; Ugu; Harry Gwala; Uthungulu	240 Secondary schools
Mpilonhle	Health Education; Care and Support for orphans & pregnant learners; HTC & treatment	Umkhanyakude: Hlabisa & Mtubatuba	72 Schools targeting 57 000 learners
Doctor without Borders	HIV Prevention; HTC & treatment	Uthungulu: Umlalazi	All secondary schools
Cindi	Opharns and Vulnerable CHildren Educational Support	Umgungundlovu District	55 Schools: 33 high & 22 Primary Schools
Love Life	Peer Education Programme: HIV Prevention & Care and Support	Umlazi, Ugu, Pinetown & Ilembe.	All secondary schools

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beyond the call of duty

## 10. Non Governmental Organisations that we partner with Cont

NGO	Programme Description	Area :Districts	Target Group
Hope2Educate	Peer Education	Ethekwini Metro	All secondary schools
PEPFAR: DREAMS	School-based HIV, violence and gender education	Ethekwini, Umgungundlovu & Umkhanyakude	Grades 7-9 learners in 150 primary and secondary schools
GLOBAL FUND	Keeping girls in school: Health education; Career guidance Academic support & Parenting programme for teen parents	Zululand	50 schools, 100 learners per school
	Soul Buddyz Clubs Peer education Programme	Uthungulu	50 schools, 100 learners per school

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beyond the call of duty



## 11. Child-Headed Households

- It is estimated that about 150 000 children are currently living in child-headed households ( Unicef, 2013)
- KZN has the largest percentage of orphans who are living in child-headed households in the country viz. 26.9%
- Rural/urban dynamics (54% in rural)
- In 2016/17 Financial Year, 30% of My Life My Future Budget which is R 15 680 000 of R 53 096 000 has been set aside for the purchase of school uniform for 22 400 learners from child-headed households
- One of the key duties of the Learner Support Agents is to conduct home visits, particularly for learners from child-headed households, to check if there are any conditions at home that need immediate attention. They then link these learners to local operation Sukuma Sakhe structures in order for them to receive necessary support.





## 12. Challenges of implementing My Life My Future

1. **Funding** : My Life My Future Campaign is solely funded through the HIV and AIDS Conditional Grant which is ring-fenced and should be strictly implemented according to the conditional grant framework and approved Business Plan
2. **Conditions of the Grant** : The Framework sets targets and specific key areas with percentages on how it should be spent
3. **The issue of learner pregnancy is impacted by a host of contributing factors which are not restricted to the school context.** For any programme to successfully address it , there must be collaborative and committed efforts from all stakeholders.
4. **Attrition:** There is a high rate of attrition for district officials and their posts are not being filled and its difficult to expand MLMF to all the schools whilst the number of district officials is decreasing year after year. For example in Uthungulu, Umkhanyakude, Umzinyathi and Uthukela there is only one coordinator responsible for the implementation of the HIV and AIDS programme whereas previously they were 4 in each district.

- Further the unavailability of specialist staff at District office level to address the demands from schools for care and support services required by affected and at risk learners, also impacts negatively on the outcomes of interventions:
  - whilst the organogram allows for 36 psychologists to cover the 12 districts, currently we have only 10 psychologists in these posts.
  - there are no psychologists in Harry Gwala; Ungungundlovu; Umkhanyakude, Uthukela, Amajuba districts.
  - The organogram allows for 24 social works to be appointed across the 12 districts, there are only 9 social workers occupying these posts.
  - Umgungundlovu; Ugu; Zululand do not have any social workers appointed.
- The situation of severe staff shortages is further compounded by officials being deployed from their core responsibilities for functionality assessments of schools every beginning and end of term and is expected to participate in examination monitoring. In the last year, officials were expected to engage in actual invigilation of exams. This significantly reduces their time for core responsibilities and activities.

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## 13. CONCLUSION

- **Given the contributory factors and the intervention challenges experienced within KZNDOE, it would be shortsighted to expect that Department of Education alone to significantly impact on the rates of learner pregnancy.**
- **For any programme to successfully address the issue of learner pregnancy there must be collaborative and committed efforts from all stakeholders.**